

LYCAENIDAE | POLYOMMATINAE | POLYOMMATINI | CASTALIINA

Genus *Tarucus* Moore, [1881] Pierrots

In: Moore, [1880-2]. *The lepidoptera of Ceylon* **1**: 81 (190 pp.). London.

Type-species: *Hesperia theophrastus* Fabricius, by original designation.

The genus *Tarucus* belongs to the Family Lycaenidae Leach, 1815; Subfamily Polyommatinae Swainson, 1827; Tribe Polyommatini Swainson, 1827; Subtribe Castaliina Distant, 1884. The other genera in the Subtribe Castaliina in the Afrotropical Region are *Tuxentius* and *Zintha*.

Tarucus (Pierrots) is a genus which is well represented in the Afrotropical, Oriental and Palaearctic Regions. Currently, it comprises two subgenera: *Tarucus* Moore, [1881] and *Kongmingius* Lie & Liu, 2025. The 12 Afrotropical species, three of which extend extralimittally, all belong to the nominate subgenus.

Afrotropical species in the genus *Tarucus* Moore, [1881]

T. theophrastus

T. thespis

T. balkanica

T. sybaris

T. bowkeri

T. rosacea

T. grammicus

T. quadratus

T. ungemachi

T. legrasi

T. kulala

T. kiki

Subgenus *Tarucus* Moore, [1881]

In: Moore, [1880-2]. *The lepidoptera of Ceylon* **1**: 81 (190 pp.). London.

Type-species: *Hesperia theophrastus* Fabricius, by original designation.

**Tarucus (Tarucus) theophrastus* (Fabricius, 1793) African Pierrot



Tarucus (Tarucus) theophrastus. Male. Nechiser N.P., Ethiopia.
Image courtesy Pamela Sai.

Hesperia theophrastus Fabricius, 1793. *Entomologia Systematica emendata et aucta* **3** (1): 281 (488 pp.).
Tarucus theophrastus Fabricius, 1793. D'Abrera, 2009: 814.

Type data: Morocco: "Habitat in Morocco".

Distribution: Senegal, Gambia, Mali, Burkina Faso, Nigeria (north), Niger, Cameroon (north), South Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, Uganda (north), Kenya (north-west), Saudi Arabia (south-west), Yemen, Oman.

Extraliminally it occurs in southern Spain, and North Africa (TL Morocco).

Misattributed to the Madagascar fauna (Stempffer, 1954). Erroneously recorded from South Africa by Trimen, 1866a (as *Lycaena theophrastus* Fabricius) (MCW). Records from India are erroneous (Larsen, 1991c: 235).

Specific localities:

Gambia – Fajara; Tanji, Kotu; Tujering; Keneba; Tendaba; Pirang, Bijilo; Janjanbureh Island; Basse (Jon Baker, pers. comm, May 2020).

Nigeria – Zaria; Bauchi (Larsen, 2005a).

Niger – Zinder (Larsen, 2005a).

Kenya – Kacheliba district (Larsen, 1991c).

Habits: This species is sometimes abundant around individual trees of its foodplant (Larsen, 2005a). Specimens are always found in close association with the larval foodplants (shrubs and trees of the genus *Ziziphus*). Roosting takes place on the tree itself or on grass stems in the vicinity of the foodplant. Both sexes visit flowers and males mud-puddle (Larsen, 1991c).

Larval food:

Ziziphus species (Rhamnaceae) [Larsen, 1991c: 235].

****Tarucus (Tarucus) thespis* (Linnaeus, 1764)**
Vivid Pierrot (#)



Tarucus (Tarucus) thespis. Male.
Image courtesy Steve Woodhall

Papilio thespis Linnaeus, 1764. *Museum Ludovicae Ulricae Reginae* 318 (720 pp.).

Lycaena thespis Linnaeus. Trimen, 1866a.

Tarucus thespis Linnaeus. Swanepoel, 1953a.

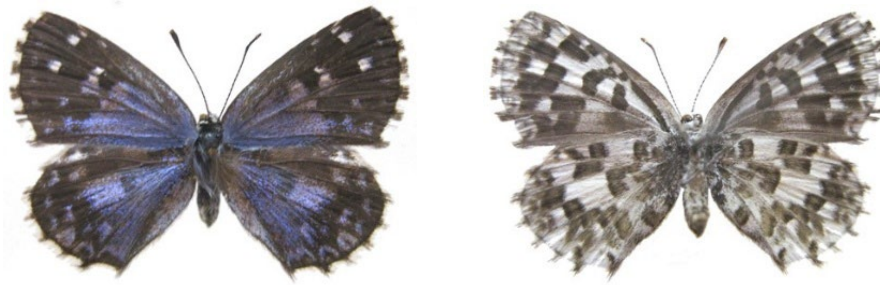
Tarucus thespis (Linnaeus, 1764). Dickson & Kroon, 1978.

Tarucus thespis (Linnaeus, 1764). Pringle *et al.*, 1994: 239.

Tarucus thespis Linnaeus, 1764. D'Abrera, 2009: 815.



Tarucus (Tarucus) thespis. Male (Wingspan 22 mm). Left – upperside; right – underside.
Matsikamma Mountain, Western Cape Province, South Africa. 10 October 2008. M. Williams.
Images M.C. Williams ex Williams Collection.



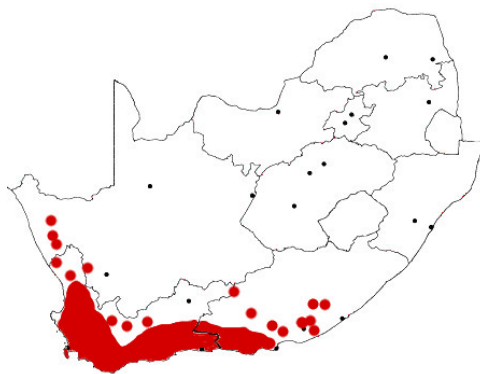
Tarucus (Tarucus) thespis. Female (Wingspan 24 mm). Left – upperside; right – underside.
Yzerfontein, Western Cape Province, South Africa. 15 September 1995. J. Greyling.
Images M.C. Williams ex Greyling Collection.

Type data: [South Africa]: “Cap. b. Spei”.

Lectotype designated by Honey & Scoble, 2001: 386.

Distribution: South Africa (Eastern Cape Province, Western Cape Province, Northern Cape Province).

In South Africa its distribution covers 131 quarter degree squares (926 records). It is regarded as widespread.



Distribution of *Tarucus (Tarucus) thespis*

South Africa (Eastern Cape Province, Western Cape Province, Northern Cape Province).

Specific localities:

South Africa –

Eastern Cape Province – Addo; Uitenhage; Grahamstown district ; Gaika’s Kop (Swanepoel, 1953).
Stutterheim (Mecenero *et al.*, 2013).

Western Cape Province – Camps Bay (Dickson, 1944). Muizenberg; Strandfontein; Tygerberg;
Malmesbury; Piketberg; Clanwilliam; Vanrhynsdorp; Paarl; Ceres; Worcester; Swellendam;
Touws River; Ladismith; George; Knysna; Uniondale (Swanepoel, 1953). Summit of the
Cedarberg (Pringle *et al.*, 1994).

Northern Cape Province – Garies (Swanepoel, 1953). Springbok (Mecenero *et al.*, 2013).

Habitat: Fynbos.

Habits: The flight is low down, among shrubs and grass, specimens frequently settling on low vegetation (Pringle *et al.*, 1994).

Flight period: All year but much commoner during the summer months (Pringle *et al.*, 1994).

Early stages:

Dickson, 1944: 20 [as *Cupido thespis*; Camps Bay, Cape Peninsula, Western Cape Province].

Clark & Dickson, 1952: 32.

Larval food:

Phylica imberbis P.J.Bergius (Rhamnaceae) [Dickson, 1944: 20].

Saxifraga species (Saxifragaceae) (exotic) [Dickson, 1944: 20; oviposition only].

pitho Linnaeus, 1764 (as sp. of *Papilio*). *Museum Ludovicae Ulricae Reginae* 337 (720 pp.). [South Africa]: “Cap. b. Spei”. Lectotype designated by Honey & Scoble, 2001: 367.

****Tarucus (Tarucus) balkanica* (Freyer, 1844)**

Balkan Pierrot

Lycaena balkanica Freyer, 1844. *Neuere Beiträge zur Schmetterlingstunde mit Abbildungen nach der Natur* **5** (71): 63 (63-74).
Tarucus balkanicus Freyer, 1844. D'Abreera, 2009: 814.

Type data: Turkey.

Distribution: Mauritania, Niger (Air region), Sudan (Khartoum), Uganda, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Oman.

Extralimittally in North Africa, Europe (south-east), Balkans, Asia Minor, Middle East, Pakistan, India and Sri Lanka.

Habitat: Very arid savanna.

Larval food:

Ziziphus species (Rhamnaceae) [Larsen, 1999].

***Tarucus (Tarucus) balkanica balkanica* (Freyer, 1844)**

Balkan Pierrot

Lycaena balkanica Freyer, 1844. *Neuere Beiträge zur Schmetterlingstunde mit Abbildungen nach der Natur* **5** (71): 63 (63-74).

Type data: Turkey.

Distribution: Mauritania, Niger (Air region), Sudan (Khartoum), Uganda, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Oman.

Extralimittally in North Africa, Europe (south-east), Balkans, Asia Minor, Middle East, Pakistan, India and Sri Lanka.

Specific localities:

Sudan – Khartoum (Larsen, 2005a).

Note: Other subspecies are extralimittal.

****Tarucus (Tarucus) sybaris* (Hopffer, 1855)**

Dotted Pierrot (#)



Tarucus (Tarucus) sybaris sybaris. Male. Left – upperside. Right – underside.
Images courtesy Allison Sharp (left) and Steve Woodhall (right).



Tarucus (Tarucus) sybaris linearis. Female. Left – upperside. Right – underside.
Images courtesy Steve Woodhall.

Lycaena sybaris Hopffer, 1855. *Berichte über die zur Bekanntmachung geeigneten Verhandlungen der Königl. Preuss. Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin* **1855**: 642 (639-643).

Tarucus sybaris Hopffer. Swanepoel, 1953a.

Tarucus sybaris (Hopffer, 1855). Dickson & Kroon, 1978.

Tarucus sybaris (Hopffer, 1855). Pringle *et al.*, 1994: 239.

Tarucus sybaris Hopffer, 1855. D'Abrera, 2009: 815.



Tarucus (Tarucus) sybaris sybaris. Male (Wingspan 24 mm). Left – upperside; right – underside.
Rustenburg N.R., North West Province, South Africa. 10 January 1998. M. Williams.
Images M.C. Williams ex Williams Collection.



Tarucus sybaris sybaris. Female (Wingspan 24 mm). Left – upperside; right – underside.
Malelane, Kruger National Park, South Africa. 11 November, 1998. M. Williams.
Images M.C. Williams ex Williams Collection.

Type data: [Mozambique].

Distribution: Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Eswatini.

Habitat: Savanna, including *Brachystegia* woodland, and grassland. In Tanzania at altitudes from 800 to 1800 m (Kielland, 1990d).

Habits: Uncommon in Tanzania (Kielland, 1990d). The flight is slow and close to the ground (Pringle *et al.*, 1994).

Flight period: All year (Pringle *et al.*, 1994).

Early stages:

Clark, 1942: 115 [as *Cupido sybaris*; locality not noted].

Clark & Dickson, 1971: 76 [as *Tarucus sybaris sybaris*; Eastern Cape].

“**Egg.** 0.55 mm diam. x 0.4 mm high. Laid singly on a young shoot, twig or leaf. Eggs are white with two sets of ribs, 16 in each set, radiating in opposite directions in involute curves, from the micropyle and extending down the sides diagonally, where they are intersected by horizontal ribs. The intersections are punctuated by elongated moles. Eggs hatch after 6-8 days. The discarded shell is not eaten. **Larva.** 1st instar 1 mm, growing to 2 mm in 5 days; 2nd instar growing to 3.5 mm in 3 days; 3rd instar growing to 6 mm in 3 days; 4th instar growing to 8-8.5 mm in 3 days; 5th instar growing to 13-14 mm in 8 days. The honey-gland and tubercles are present in the 2nd to 5th instars. The final-instar tubercles have 24 finely barbed spines each. Larvae feed on the surface of a leaf in troughs which disclose their presence. Later they strip the whole surface, leaving a shrivelled parchment-like relic. In the earlier instars larvae are very pale whitish green with reddish markings but in the later instars they are pale green with a light dorsum, split on the leading segments by a fine red line. Pupation takes place among dead leaves. There are two or three broods and the last brood hibernates in the larval state, but hibernation may not occur in warm localities. Ants ‘milk’ the larvae in the 3rd to 5th instars when they meet the latter. **Pupa.** 8-9 mm. Secured to dead leaves by the cremastral hooks and a girdle. The [duration of the] pupal state varies. In summer it is from 8 to 10 days but in the case of larvae which have overwintered it is from 19-27 days. The colour is either pale green or pale brown, spotted with black. The pupa is covered with small setae on diminutive moles. **Parasites.** Egg attacked by very small chalcids (*Trichogramma* sp.?), which leave a neat hole of exit on the side of the egg. Larva attacked by *Apanteles* sp. in the 3rd and 4th instars; also by other small braconids and ichneumonids. Diptera such as *Zenillia uniseta* and *Z. versicolor* have so far been identified as other parasites. These emerge from the side of the now yellow larva and

pupate after 24-36 hours, the flies themselves emerging after 12 days. Parasites that have attacked the larva, such as *Pimpla* spp. and Diptera, may only emerge from the pupa; the *Pimpla* do so by breaking away the head-piece.”



Tarucus (Tarucus) sybaris. Left: Final instar larva. Right: Pupa.
Images courtesy Allison Sharp.

Larval food:

Ziziphus mucronata Willd. (Rhamnaceae) [Clark, 1942: 118].

Ziziphus zeyheriana Sond. (Rhamnaceae) [Joannou, *in* Pringle *et al.*, 1994: 239].

Tarucus (Tarucus) sybaris sybaris (Hopffer, 1855) Dotted Pierrot (#)

Lycaena sybaris Hopffer, 1855. *Berichte über die zur Bekanntmachung geeigneten Verhandlungen der Königl. Preuss. Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin* **1855**: 642 (639-643).



Tarucus (Tarucus) sybaris sybaris. Male (Wingspan 24 mm). Left – upperside; right – underside.
Rustenburg N.R., North West Province, South Africa. 10 January 1998. M. Williams.
Images M.C. Williams ex Williams Collection.



Tarucus sybaris sybaris. Female (Wingspan 24 mm). Left – upperside; right – underside.
Malelane, Kruger National Park, South Africa. 11 November, 1998. M. Williams.
Images M.C. Williams ex Williams Collection.

Type data: [Mozambique].

Distribution: Tanzania (west), Malawi, Zambia (widespread), Mozambique, Zimbabwe, South Africa (Limpopo Province, Mpumalanga, North West Province, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape Province), Eswatini.

In South Africa its distribution covers 217 quarter degree squares (884 records). It is regarded as very widespread.

Specific localities:

Tanzania – Kigoma; Mpanda; Ufipa (Kielland, 1990d). Katavi National Park (Fitzherbert *et al.*, 2006).

Zambia – Mpongwe; Itawa Dambo; Ndola; Luangwa Bridge; Mporokoso; Sumbu (Heath *et al.*, 2002).

South Africa –

Limpopo Province – Throughout (Swanepoel, 1953). Doorndraai Dam Nature Reserve; Percy Fyfe Nature Reserve (Warren, 1990). Highlands Wilderness (Bode & Bode, unpublished checklist).

Soetdoring Farm [-24.561 28.233] (A. Mayer, pers comm. 2015). Bateleur Nature Reserve (Williams & Dobson, unpub., 2015).

Mpumalanga – Throughout (Swanepoel, 1953). Malelane.

North West Province – Throughout (Swanepoel, 1953). Kgaswane Mountain Reserve (Williams). Utopia Resort (C. Dobson, 2006). Borakalalo Nature Reserve (J. Dobson, unpublished, 2010).

Gauteng – Throughout (Swanepoel, 1953). Witwatersrand Botanical Gardens (J. Dobson, unpublished checklist, 2001). Buffelsdrif Conservancy (Williams).

KwaZulu-Natal – Umkomaas; Hluhluwe; Pietermaritzburg; Eshowe; Estcourt; Biggarsberg (Swanepoel, 1953). Muden.

Eastern Cape Province – Tsomo River; Bashee River; Cookhouse (Swanepoel, 1953).

Eswatini – Throughout (Swanepoel, 1953). Mlawula Nature Reserve (www.sntc.org.sz).

***Tarucus (Tarucus) sybaris linearis* (Aurivillius, [1924])**

Desert Dotted Pierrot (#)

Cupido sybaris var. *linearis* Aurivillius, [1924]. In: Seitz, [1908-25]. *Die Gross-Schmetterlinge der Erde*, Stuttgart (2) **13** *Die Afrikanischen Tagfalter*: 465 (614 pp.).

Tarucus sybaris linearis (Aurivillius, 1924). Pringle *et al.*, 1994: 239.

Tarucus sybaris linearis Aurivillius, 1924. D'Abrera, 2009: 815.



Tarucus (Tarucus) sybaris linearis. Male (Wingspan 23 mm). Left – upperside; right – underside.
Kenhardt, Northern Cape Province, South Africa. 24 March 2009. M. Williams.
Images M.C. Williams ex Williams Collection.



Tarucus (Tarucus) sybaris linearis. Female. Left – upperside; right – underside.
Van Zyls Rus, North West, South Africa. February 2021. J. Dobson.
Images M.C. Williams ex Dobson Collection.

Type data: [Namibia]: “Damara”; South Africa: “Transvaal” [False locality].

Diagnosis: Differs from the nominate subspecies in the reduced dark marginal bands on the upperside of the wings (Pringle *et al.*, 1994).

Distribution: Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo (Lualaba, Shaba), Botswana, Namibia, South Africa (Free State Province, Northern Cape Province).

In South Africa its distribution covers 41 quarter degree squares (96 records). It is regarded as moderately widespread.

Specific localities:

Botswana – Widespread; Middelspits; Mabuasehube (Larsen, 1991).

South Africa –

Free State Province – Bloemfontein (Irving).

Northern Cape Province – Barkly West; Kimberley (Swanepoel, 1953).

vreuricki Dufrane, 1954 (as f. of *Tarucus sybaris*). *Bulletin et Annales de la Société Royale Entomologique de Belgique* **90**: 286 (282-286). [Democratic Republic of Congo]: “sans localité précise”.

****Tarucus (Tarucus) bowkeri* (Trimen, 1883)**
Chequered Pierrot (#)

Lycaena bowkeri Trimén, 1883. *Transactions of the Entomological Society of London* **1883**: 351 (347-363).

Tarucus bowkeri Trimén. Swanepoel, 1953a.

Tarucus bowkeri (Trimén, 1883). Dickson & Kroon, 1978.

Tarucus bowkeri (Trimén, 1883). Pringle *et al.*, 1994: 239.

Tarucus bowkeri Trimén, 1883. D'Abrera, 2009: 815.



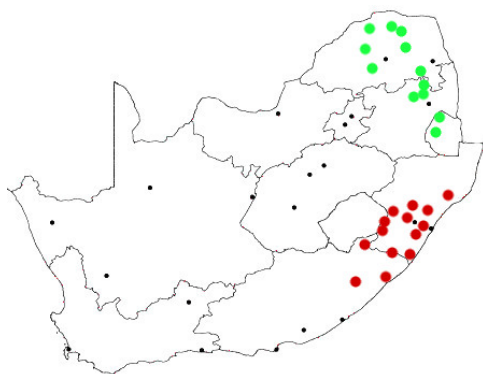
Tarucus (Tarucus) bowkeri bowkeri. Male (Wingspan 25 mm). Left – upperside; right – underside.
Bushman's Nek, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. 30 January 2007. M. Williams.
Images M.C. Williams ex Williams Collection.



Tarucus (Tarucus) bowkeri bowkeri. Female (Wingspan 27 mm). Left – upperside; right – underside.
Bushman's Nek, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. 2 January 2008. J. Dobson.
Images M.C. Williams ex Dobson Collection.

Type data: [South Africa]: “summit of a high hill overlooking the Inchanga Valley in Natal”.

Distribution: South Africa, Eswatini.



Distribution of *Tarucus (Tarucus) bowkeri*

[ssp. *bowkeri* – red dots] South Africa (KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape Province).

[ssp. *transvaalensis* – green dots] South Africa (Limpopo Province, Mpumalanga), Eswatini.

Habitat: High-rainfall montane grassland, often on the edges of temperate forest.

Habits: The flight is weak. Individuals flutter around ironstone outcrops and settle on low bushes or on the ground (Pringle *et al.*, 1994).

Flight period: The summer months. At lower altitudes (Inchanga) a few specimens are out in the winter months. Subspecies *transvaalensis* flies from October to March, with a peak in October (Pringle *et al.*, 1994).

Early stages:

Clark & Dickson, 1971: 80 [as *Tarucus bowkeri*; above Inchanga Valley, KwaZulu-Natal; nominate subspecies].

“**Egg.** 0.6 mm diam. x 0.4 mm high. Laid singly on a leaf or stalk. Eggs are white, with white ribbing arranged in two sets, 24 in each, radiating, in opposite directions, from the micropyle in involute curves and continuing diagonally down the sides. The intersections are punctuated by mediumly extended moles. Eggs hatch after 8-11 days. The discarded shell is not eaten. **Larva.** 1st instar 0.8-0.9 mm, growing to 1.6 mm in 6 days; 2nd instar growing to 2.5 mm in 6-7 days; 3rd instar growing to 4.25 mm in 6-8 days; 4th instar growing to 6.25-7 mm in 5-6 days; 5th instar growing to 12-13 mm in 9-10 days. The honey-gland is present in the 2nd to 5th instars, and the tubercles from the 3rd to 5th instars. Larvae appear to be furry owing to long setae which they bear. The colour varies from whitish, matching the underside of the leaves, to very pale blue-green with white and green stripes to match the upperside of the leaves. Some larvae have a purple-green dorsal stripe which can be mistaken for the midrib of a leaf. Larvae are not easy to detect owing to this effective means of camouflage. Half-way through the final instar larvae commence at the point of a leaf and eat downwards, consuming the whole leaf. There is a succession of broods. **Pupa.** 8.25-9 mm. Secured to a leaf or twig by the cremastral hooks and a girdle. The ground-colour is green but intensified grey mottling will give it a dark green to almost black appearance. The imago emerges after 14-16 days.”

Larval food:

Phylica paniculata Willd. (Rhamnaceae) [Clark & Dickson, 1971: 80].

Tarucus (Tarucus) bowkeri bowkeri (Trimen, 1883) Chequered Pierrot

Lycaena bowkeri Trimen, 1883. *Transactions of the Entomological Society of London* **1883**: 351 (347-363).



Tarucus (Tarucus) bowkeri bowkeri. Male (Wingspan 25 mm). Left – upperside; right – underside.
Bushman's Nek, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. 30 January 2007. M. Williams.
Images M.C. Williams ex Williams Collection.



Tarucus (Tarucus) bowkeri bowkeri. Female (Wingspan 27 mm). Left – upperside; right – underside.
Bushman's Nek, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. 2 January 2008. J. Dobson.
Images M.C. Williams ex Dobson Collection.

Type data: [South Africa]: “summit of a high hill overlooking the Inchanga Valley in Natal”.

Distribution: South Africa (KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape Province).

In South Africa its distribution covers 23 quarter degree squares (261 records). It is regarded as moderately widespread.

Specific localities:

South Africa –

KwaZulu-Natal – Inchanga (TL; Bowker). Harding; Impetyeni Forest; Pietermaritzburg – Swartkop; Karkloof; Kranskop; Balcomb's Hill (Swanepoel, 1953). Upper Mooi River (Pennington).

Bushman's Nek (Pringle *et al.*, 1994). Eshowe (Mecenero *et al.*, 2013).

Eastern Cape Province – The mountain above Port St. Johns (Quickelberge).

Tarucus (Tarucus) bowkeri transvaalensis Quickelberge, 1972
Northern Chequered Pierrot (#)

Tarucus bowkeri transvaalensis Quickelberge, 1972. *Entomologist's Record and Journal of Variation* **84**: 234 (233-238).

Tarucus bowkeri transvaalensis Quickelberge, 1972. Dickson & Kroon, 1978.

Tarucus bowkeri transvaalensis Quickelberge, 1972. Pringle *et al.*, 1994: 239.

Tarucus bowkeri transvaalensis Quickelberge, 1972. D'Abrera, 2009: 815.



Tarucus (Tarucus) bowkeri transvaalensis. Male (Wingspan 24 mm). Left – upperside; right – underside.
Graskop, Mpumalanga, South Africa. 19 October 1991. M. Williams.
Images M.C. Williams ex Williams Collection.



Tarucus (Tarucus) bowkeri transvaalensis. Female. Left – upperside; right – underside.
Panorama Gorge, Graskop, Mpumalanga, South Africa. September 2002. J. Dobson.
Images M.C. Williams ex Dobson Collection.

Type data: South Africa: “Kawyn’s Pass, Graskop, Transvaal”.

Diagnosis: This subspecies differs from the nominate one in the following respects: upperside blue ground-colour of the male less violaceous and more extensive and there are no dark markings in the blue ground-colour. The female has reduced white markings on the upperside. In both sexes the underside creamy ground-colour is lighter and the underside spots are greyer (Pringle *et al.*, 1994).

Distribution: South Africa (Limpopo Province, Mpumalanga), Eswatini (Duke *et al.*, 1999).

In South Africa its distribution covers 15 quarter degree squares (155 records). It is regarded as localized.

Specific localities:

South Africa –

Limpopo Province – Blouberg (Wykeham). Louis Trichardt (Mecenero *et al.*, 2013).

Mpumalanga – Kowyn’s Pass, near Graskop (TL; Pennington). Mount Sheba Nature Reserve, at 1 800 m (Pringle *et al.*, 1994). The Bonnet, near Pilgrim’s Rest; Sterkspruit Nature Reserve (Williams).

Eswatini – Mbabane (Mecenero *et al.*, 2013).

****Tarucus (Tarucus) rosacea* (Austaut, 1885)**
Mediterranean Pierrot

Lycaena theophrastus var. *rosacea* Austaut, 1885. *Le Naturaliste* 7 (18): 141 (141-142).

Tarucus rosacea Austaut, 1885. D’Abrera, 2009: 814.



Tarucus (Tarucus) rosacea. Male. Left – upperside; right – underside.
Ougadoudou, Burkina Faso. 12 July 1996. A. Gardiner.
Images M.C. Williams ex Gardiner Collection.



Tarucus (Tarucus) rosacea. Female. Left – upperside; right – underside.
Ougadoudou, Burkina Faso. 12 July 1996. A. Gardiner.
Images M.C. Williams ex Gardiner Collection.

Type data: Algeria: “entre El-Arricha et le Maroc”.

Distribution: Mauritania, Senegal, Gambia, Guinea, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast (north), Ghana (north), Nigeria (north), Niger, Cameroon (north), Chad, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Uganda (north), Kenya (north-west), Somalia, Djibouti, Arabia (including Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Oman).

Extralimittally in North Africa, the Middle East, and north-western India.

Specific localities:

Gambia – Kotu; Brufut; Abuko; Pirang; Brusubi; Bijilo; Keneba; Tendaba; Janjanbureh; Walikunda;

Basse (Jon Baker, pers. comm, May 2020).

Ghana – Mole National Park (J. Cihra, *vide* Larsen, 2005a).

Nigeria – Kano; Sokoto (Larsen, 2005a).

Kenya – Kacheliba/Suk; Mount Kulal district (Larsen, 1991c).

Habitat: Sudan savanna and the Sahel in West Africa (Larsen, 2005a).

Habits: Similar to those of *Tarucus legrasi* (Larsen, 1991c). It may sometimes be common on flowering *Ziziphus*, often roosting on straws of grass or on twigs beneath the tree (Larsen, 2005a).

Larval food:

Ziziphus mauritiana Lam. (Rhamnaceae) [Van Someren, 1974: 330; as *Ziziphus jujuba* L.].

Associated ants:

Plagiolepis species (Formicidae) [Ackery *et al.*, 1995].

Camponotus species (Formicidae) [Ackery *et al.*, 1995].

Monomorium species (Formicidae) [Ackery *et al.*, 1995].

mediterraneae Bethune-Baker, 1918 (as sp. of *Tarucus*). *Transactions of the Entomological Society of London* **1917**: 281 (269-296). Egypt: “Alexandria”.

****Tarucus (Tarucus) grammicus* (Grose-Smith & Kirby, [1893])**

Dark Pierrot

Lycaenesthes grammicus Grose-Smith & Kirby, [1893]. *litt.*: Grose-Smith & Kirby, [1892-7]. *Rhopalocera exotica*, being illustrations of new, rare and unfigured species of butterflies **2**: 102 (261 pp.).

Tarucus grammicus Grose-Smith & Kirby, 1893. D’Abrera, 2009: 815.



Tarucus (Tarucus) grammicus. Male. Left – upperside; right – underside.
Ghibe-Tolley, Ethiopia. 13 September 1997. A. Gardiner.
Images M.C. Williams ex Gardiner Collection.



Tarucus (Tarucus) grammicus. Female. Left – upperside; right – underside.
Ghibe-Tolley, Ethiopia. 14 September 1997. A. Gardiner.
Images M.C. Williams ex Gardiner Collection.

Type data: [Kenya]: “Mombasa”.

Distribution: Yemen, Ethiopia (south), Somalia, Uganda, Kenya (east, north), Tanzania (north).

Specific localities:

Somalia – Wagga Mountain; Dobar (Sharpe, 1898).

Kenya – Mombasa (TL); coast; Nairobi; Tsavo; West Pokot; upper Tana River (Larsen, 1991c).

Tanzania – Northern Highlands; Kimboza Forest; Uluguru Mountains; Nguru Mountains; Ukaguru Mountains; Pugu Hills (Kielland, 1990d).

Habitat: Savanna and forest margins. In Tanzania at altitudes from near sea-level to 1 500 m (Kielland, 1990d).

Habits: Flies weakly, just above ground level. Larsen (1991c) once found vast numbers in May, feeding from every small flower available, in the Tsavo area.

Larval food:

Ziziphus abysinnica A.Rich. (Rhamnaceae) [Van Someren, 1974: 330].

Ziziphus mauritiana Lam. (Rhamnaceae) [Kielland, 1990d: 217; as *Ziziphus jujuba* L.].

louisae Sharpe, 1898 (as sp. of *Tarucus*). *Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London* **1898**: 370, 371 (369-372).
Somalia: “Wagga Mountain, 6000 ft; Dobar”.

****Tarucus (Tarucus) quadratus* Ogilvie-Grant, 1899**

Socotra Pierrot

Tarucus quadratus Ogilvie-Grant, 1899. *Bulletin of the Liverpool Museums* **2**: 10 (10-11).

Tarucus quadratus Ogilvie-Grant, 1899. D’Abrera, 2009: 815.

Type data: Yemen: “Sokotra”.

Distribution: Yemen (Socotra Island), Somalia.

****Tarucus (Tarucus) ungemachi* Stempffer, 1942**

Savanna Pierrot

Tarucus ungemachi Stempffer, 1942. *Annales de la Société Entomologique de France* **111**: 121 (117-134).

Tarucus ungemachi Stempffer, 1942. D’Abrera, 2009: 814.

Type data: [Ethiopia]: “Rivière Baro Abyssinie occidentale”.

Distribution: Senegal, Gambia, Guinea, Burkina Faso, Ghana (north), Benin (central, north), Nigeria (north), Cameroon (north), Chad, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Uganda (north), Kenya (north-west).

Specific localities:

Gambia – Fajara, Kotu, Tujering, Brusubi, Bijilo, Bintang Bolong, Keneba, Janjanbureh Island, Basse, Kundam (Jon Baker, pers. comm, May 2020).

Ghana – Mole National Park; Bole; Nakpanduri (Larsen, 2005a).

Benin – see Coache *et al.* (2017).

Ethiopia – Baro River (TL).

Kenya – Kacheliba; Ortum (Larsen, 1991c).

Habitat: Savanna. In West Africa in Sudan savanna and, to a lesser extent, Guinea savanna (Larsen, 2005a).

Habits: Occurs in small colonies around isolated specimens of the larval foodplant, which also serves as a nectar source for the adults. The habits are similar to those of *Tarucus theophrastus* (Larsen, 1991c; Larsen, 2005a). Both sexes are often found feeding on the flowers of *Tridax* and other species (Larsen, 2005a). Males are avid mud-puddlers (Larsen, 2005a).

Larval food:

Ziziphus abyssinica A.Rich. (Rhamnaceae) [Van Someren, 1974: 330].

****Tarucus (Tarucus) legrasi* Stempffer, 1948**

Sahel Pierrot

Tarucus legrasi Stempffer, 1948. *Revue Française d'Entomologie* **15**: 194 (185-196).

Tarucus legrasi Stempffer, 1948. D'Abrera, 2009: 814.

Type data: [Senegal] (Larsen, 2005a): "Sénégal-Niger (sans localité précise)".

Distribution: Senegal, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast (north), Nigeria (north), Niger (Aïr), Cameroon (north), Chad, Sudan, Somalia, Uganda (north), Kenya (north-west).

Specific localities:

Kenya – Kacheliba/Suk (Larsen, 1991c).

Habitat: Arid (Sahelian) savanna.

Habits: Often sympatric with one or more of its congeners. Seems to fly low down and females oviposit on low-growing *Ziziphus* plants (Larsen, 1991c).

Larval food:

Ziziphus species (Rhamnaceae) [Larsen, 1991c: 237; Burkina Faso].

****Tarucus (Tarucus) kulala* Evans, 1955**

Turkana Pierrot

Tarucus kulala Evans, 1955. *Entomologist* **88**: 185 (179-187).

Tarucus kulala Evans, 1955. D'Abrera, 2009: 814.

Type data: Kenya: "Kulal, N. Kenya".

Distribution: Somalia (Ogaden), Kenya (north).

Specific localities:

Kenya – Mount Kulal District (TL); Upper Tana River (Larsen, 1991c).

Habits: S.C. Collins found many specimens feeding from the flowers of *Loewia tanaensis* (Turneraceae) on the upper Tana River (Larsen, 1991c).

Larval food:

Ziziphus species (Rhamnaceae) (probably) [Larsen, 1991c: 237].

****Tarucus (Tarucus) kiki* Larsen, 1976**

Grey Pierrot

Tarucus kiki Larsen, 1976. *Bulletin de l'Institut Fondamental de l'Afrique Noire (A)* **37**: 685 (684-686).

Tarucus kiki Larsen, 1976. D'Abrera, 2009: 814.

Type data: Nigeria: "Kaduna".

Distribution: Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast (extreme north), Nigeria.

Specific localities:

Burkina Faso – Ouagadougou (Larsen, 2005a); Koupela (ABRI, *vide* Larsen, 2005a).

Nigeria – Central Kaduna (TL); Kano (Larsen, 2005a).

Habitat: Savanna.

Larval food:

Ziziphus species (Rhamnaceae) [Larsen, 2005a].