

1-[2',4'-DIHYDROXY-3',5'-DI-(3''-METHYLBUT-2''-ENYL)-6'-METHOXY]  
PHENYLETHANONE FROM *ACRONYCHIA PEDUNCULATA* ROOT BARK

VIJAYA KUMAR, VERANJA KARUNARATNE and M. R. SANATH K. MEEGALLE

Department of Chemistry, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

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Key Word Index—*Acronychia pedunculata*; Rutaceae; arylketone; 1-[2',4'-dihydroxy-3',5'-di-(3''-methylbut-2''-enyl)-6'-methoxy]phenylethanone; furoquinoline alkaloids; acronylin; acrovestone; bergapten.Abstract—A new arylketone, 1-[2',4'-dihydroxy-3',5'-di-(3''-methylbut-2''-enyl)-6'-methoxy]phenylethanone, was isolated together with acronylin, acrovestone, bergapten,  $\beta$ -amyrin and three furoquinoline alkaloids from the root bark of *Acronychia pedunculata*.

## INTRODUCTION

*Acronychia pedunculata* is a small tree widely distributed in Sri Lanka. Its bark is used as an external application in the treatment of sores and ulcers [1]. The furoquinoline alkaloids, kokusagine and evolitrine, have been isolated from *A. pedunculata* leaves and timber respectively [2]. Acronylin and demethylacronylin were found to be present in the stem bark of *A. laurifolia* [3, 4], which is believed to be synonymous with *A. pedunculata* [1].

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Chromatographic separation of the basic fraction of the dichloromethane extract of *A. pedunculata* root bark gave the furoquinoline alkaloids, skimmianine, dictamine and kokusagine. The neutral fraction on separation gave the new phenylethanone 1, acronylin (2), acrovestone, the coumarin bergapten and the triterpenoid,  $\beta$ -amyrin. Cyclization of acronylin with DDQ gave the bromene 3.

The IR spectrum of the phenylethanone 1,  $C_{19}H_{26}O_4$ , indicated it to be an aromatic compound with chelated hydroxyl and carbonyl groups. Its  $^1H$  NMR spectrum showed two  $D_2O$  exchangeable signals at  $\delta$  6.20 and 13.56 suggesting that only one of the two hydroxyl groups present was chelated. Methyl singlets at  $\delta$  3.70 and 2.66 indicated the presence of an OMe group and a -COMe group. A triplet at  $\delta$  5.29 ( $J = 6$  Hz) and a doublet at  $\delta$  3.36 ( $J = 6$  Hz) respectively due to two vinyl protons and four allylic methylene protons and two singlets due to four allylic methyl groups at  $\delta$  1.76 and 1.83 suggested that two isopentenyl groups were attached to the aromatic nucleus. Peaks at  $m/z$  263 and 207 in the mass spectrum of 1 for successive cleavage of the isopentenyl groups at allylic positions provided additional evidence for the presence of these groups. The absence of aromatic proton signals in its  $^1H$  NMR spectrum was in keeping with 1 having a structure containing a methoxy and an acetyl group, two isopentenyl group and two hydroxyl group substituents attached to a benzene ring.

Biogenetic considerations and the presence of a chelated hydroxyl group suggested two possible structures (1 and 4) for the compound. Acetylation gave a diacetate 5,

whose  $^1H$  NMR spectrum showed two distinct singlets at  $\delta$  2.16 and 2.23 for the OAc methyl groups. The diacetate could not have the symmetrical structure 6, which would be expected to show a single signal for these methyl groups in  $^1H$  NMR. The phenylethanone was therefore 1, 1-[2',4'-dihydroxy-3',5'-di-(3''-methylbut-2''-enyl)-6'-methoxy]phenylethanone (1).

## EXPERIMENTAL

Mps: uncorr; IR: KBr;  $^1H$  NMR: 60 MHz,  $CDCl_3$  using TMS as int. standard. Optical rotations:  $CHCl_3$  at 25°. Prep: TLC: Merck silica gel PF<sub>254+366</sub>. Petrol: 40–60°. Identities of compounds were established by mmp, IR and  $^1H$  NMR comparisons, unless otherwise stated. *A. pedunculata* was collected from Gannoruwa in central Sri Lanka and a voucher specimen has been deposited in the University herbarium.

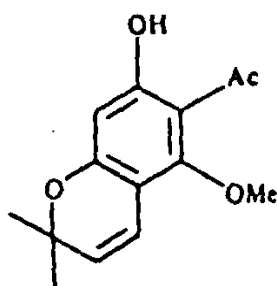
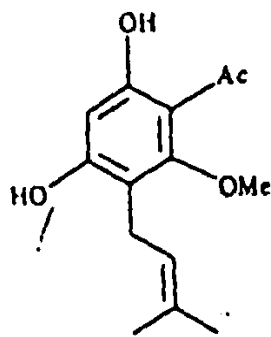
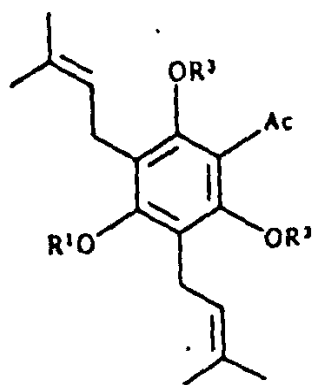
**Extraction.** Dried ground *A. pedunculata* root bark (1.2 kg) was extracted with  $CH_2Cl_2$  at 27° for two 24 hr periods each. Conc'n of the combined solns gave 150.3 g of the  $CH_2Cl_2$  extract.

**Separation of the basic fraction of the  $CH_2Cl_2$  extract.** The  $CH_2Cl_2$  extract (148 g) was dissolved in  $Et_2O$  (500 ml) and washed with 2%  $H_2SO_4$ . Conc'n of the  $CH_2Cl_2$  layer at 40° gave the neutral fraction (140 g). The aq. layer was washed with  $Et_2O$ , neutralized ( $Na_2CO_3$ ) and extracted with  $CH_2Cl_2$ . Conc'n of the  $CH_2Cl_2$  extract at 40° gave the basic fraction (1.2 g).

**Chromatography of the basic fraction.** The basic fraction (1.2 g) was chromatographed on silica gel using  $CH_2Cl_2$ -petrol mixtures for elution. Elution with  $CH_2Cl_2$ -petrol (1:4) gave a fraction which on prep. TLC ( $EtOAc$ -petrol, 1:4) followed by recrystallization from  $CH_2Cl_2$ -petrol gave dictamine (53 mg), mp 127–129° (lit. [5] mp 132°), skimmianine (14 mg), mp 178–180° (lit. [5] mp 176°) and kokusagine (17 mg), mp 169–170° (lit. [2] mp 171°), identical with authentic material.

**Chromatography of the neutral fraction.** The neutral fraction (140 g) was chromatographed (MPLC) on silica gel using hexane- $CH_2Cl_2$ -MeOH mixtures for elution. Elution with  $EtOAc$ -petrol (1:49) gave on trituration with  $Et_2O$ , a yellow solid which crystallized from  $CH_2Cl_2$ -petrol as yellow needles of acrovestone (220 mg), mp 143–145°, (lit. [6] mp 142–142.5°).

Elution with  $EtOAc$ -petrol (1:19) followed by flash chromatography ( $CH_2Cl_2$ -petrol, 1:9) gave  $\beta$ -amyrin (33 mg), mp 196–198°,  $[\alpha]_D + 87.3^\circ$  (lit. [5] mp 197°,  $[\alpha]_D + 87^\circ$ ) and



- 1  $R^1 = R^2 = H, R^3 = Me$   
 4  $R^1 = Me, R^2 = R^3 = H$   
 5  $R^1 = R^2 = COMe, R^3 = H$   
 6  $R^1 = R^2 = COMe, R^3 = H$

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less needles of acronylin (2) (43 mg) mp 128–130° (lit. [3] 28–129°), and on prep. TLC ( $CH_2Cl_2$ -petrol, 1:4, 2 developments), 1-[2,4'-dihydroxy-3',5'-di-(3''-methylbut-2''-enyl)-6'-oxy]phenylethanone (1) as a yellow oil (43 mg) (HR-MS 835 [M]<sup>+</sup>; Calc. for  $C_{19}H_{26}O_4$ : 318.1831); IR  $\nu_{max}$   $cm^{-1}$ : 3150, 1660 and 1600; <sup>1</sup>H NMR:  $\delta$  1.76 and 1.83 (each s, 6H, Me), 2.66 (s, 3H, COMe), 3.36 (d, 4H,  $J = 6$  Hz, 1''-H), 3.70 (s, 3H, OMe), 5.29 (t, 2H,  $J = 6$  Hz, 2''-H) 6.26 and 13.56 (each s, 1H, D<sub>2</sub>O exchangeable, OH); MS  $m/z$  (rel. int.): 318 [M]<sup>+</sup> (100), 303 (27), 275 (33), 263 (54), 247 (72), 219 (12) and 207 (11).

Acetylation with EtOAc-hexane (3:17) followed by prep. TLC ( $CH_2Cl_2$ -petrol, 1:9) gave bergapten as colourless needles (43 mg), mp 186–188° (lit. [5] mp 188–191°).

Acetylation of 2. Acronylin (2) (31 mg) in  $C_6H_6$  was treated with DDQ (0.1 g) at 60° for 8 hr. The usual work-up followed by prep. TLC ( $CH_2Cl_2$ -petrol, 1:9) gave 6-acetyl-7-hydroxy-5-methoxy-2,2-dimethylchromene (3) (26 mg), as a yellow oil, IR  $\nu_{max}$   $cm^{-1}$ : 3350, 1640 and 1590; <sup>1</sup>H NMR:  $\delta$  1.50 (s, 6H, 2-Me), 2.66 (s, 3H, COMe), 3.73 (s, 3H, OMe), 5.24 (d, 1H,  $J = 10$  Hz, 3-H), 6.23 (s, 1H, 8-H), 6.62 (d, 1H,  $J = 10$  Hz, 4-H) and 6.62 (s, 1H, D<sub>2</sub>O exchangeable, OH); MS  $m/z$  (rel. int.): 248 [M]<sup>+</sup> (31), 206 (46), 193 (100) and 151 (71).

Acetylation of 1. Phenylethanone 1 (20 mg) with Ac<sub>2</sub>O-pyridine (1:2, 3 ml) at 27° for 18 hr gave on work-up 1-[2,4'-di-(3'-methoxy-3',5'-di-(3''-methylbut-2''-enyl)-6'-methoxy]phenylethanone (5) (28 mg), as a yellow oil, IR  $\nu_{max}$   $cm^{-1}$ : 3350, 1760, 1600 and 1600; <sup>1</sup>H NMR:  $\delta$  1.74 (s, 12H, 3''-Me), 2.16 and 2.23

(each s, 3H, OAc), 2.50 (s, 3H, COMe), 3.13 (m, 4H,  $W_{1/2} = 6$  Hz, 1''-H), 3.66 (s, 3H, OMe) and 4.80–5.20 (m, 2H,  $W_{1/2} = 6$  Hz, 2''-H); MS  $m/z$  (rel. int.): 402 [M]<sup>+</sup> (5), 359 (100), 354 (14), 317 (27), 302 (100), 389 (28) and 219 (82).

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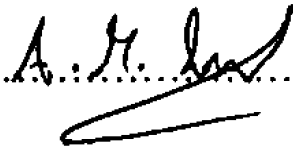
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