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Synthetic studies of ingenol: synthesis of *in, out*-tricyclo[7.4.1.0^{1,5}]tetradecan-14-one

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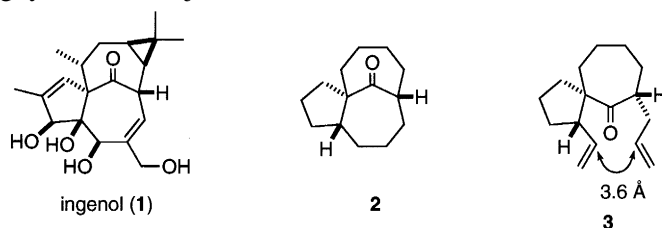
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Abstract

in, out-Tricyclo[7.4.1.0^{1,5}]tetradecan-14-one was synthesized from γ -butyrolactone in 12 steps using ring-closing olefin metathesis as the key step. © 2000 Elsevier Science Ltd. All rights reserved.

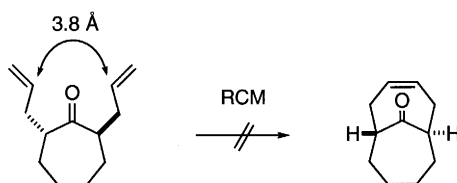
Ingenol (**1**) is a diterpenoid isolated from *Euphorbia ingens*, possessing a bicyclo[4.4.1]undecane skeleton with a highly strained *inside-outside* intrabridgehead stereochemistry.¹ Many derivatives have also been isolated.¹ Ingenol and its derivatives interest organic chemists not only because of their unique framework but also their biological activities, such as protein kinase C (PKC)-activating and anti-HIV activities.^{2,3} Despite many synthetic studies,⁴ ingenol has not been synthesized and only a few strategies for the construction of the unique *in, out*-bicyclo[4.4.1]undecane skeleton have been disclosed by Winkler,⁵ Funk,⁶ Rigby,⁷ and Kuwajima.⁸



The strategies for the *inside-outside* intrabridgehead stereochemistry, such as the de Mayo reaction and fragmentation,⁵ the Ireland–Claisen rearrangement for ring contraction,⁶ the 1,5-H sigmatropy to change the intrabridgehead stereochemistry from *out-out* to *in-out*,⁷ and the tandem cyclization–rearrangement reaction,⁸ have appeared, however, the direct cyclization to the *in, out*-bicyclo[4.4.1]undecane system has not been reported. We describe herein the synthesis of *in, out*-tricyclo[7.4.1.0^{1,5}]tetradecan-14-one (**2**) by direct cyclization using olefin metathesis.

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The key reaction of this synthesis was the ring-closing olefin metathesis with a Grubbs' ruthenium catalyst, $\text{RuCl}_2(=\text{CHPh})(\text{PCy}_3)_2$, which provides a new strategy for the synthesis of cyclic natural products.⁹ In the ring-closing olefin metathesis, it is important that the two olefins being connected to each other should be closely arranged. In the preliminary study, we found that ring-closing olefin metathesis of *trans*-2,7-diallylcycloheptanone did not afford *in,out*-bicyclo[4.4.1]undecene but dimeric compounds (Scheme 1). Thus, we chose olefin **3** as a key intermediate, in which the distance between the two terminal olefins is closer, about 3.6 Å based on a molecular mechanics calculation,¹⁰ than that of *trans*-2,7-diallylcycloheptanone.



Scheme 1. Ring-closing olefin metathesis of *trans*-2,7-diallylcycloheptanone

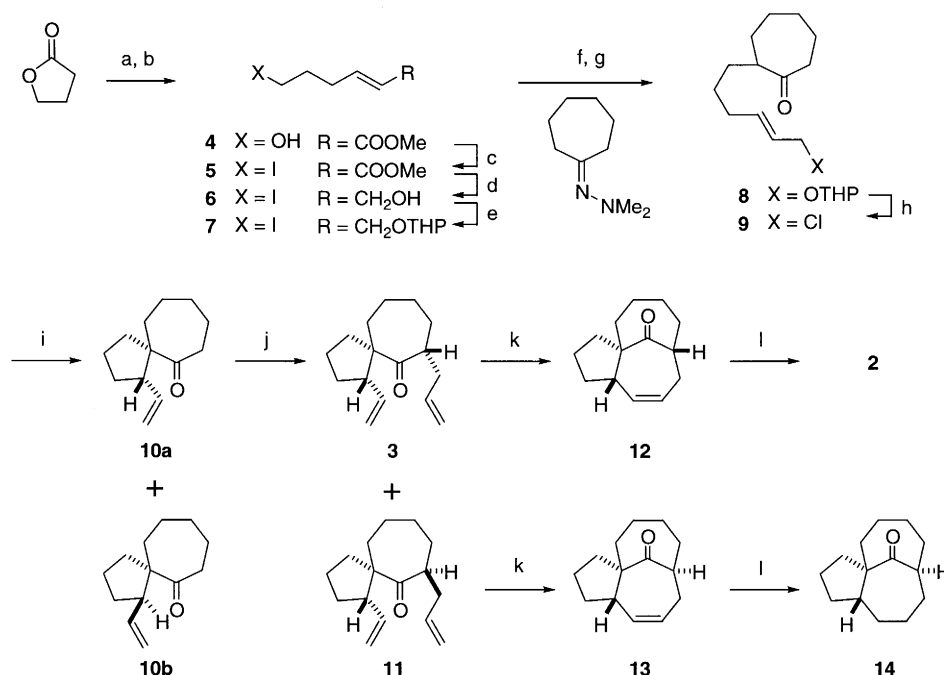
The synthesis of **2** is illustrated in Scheme 2.¹¹ γ -Butyrolactone was reduced with DIBAL to give a hemiacetal, the Wittig reaction of which afforded the unsaturated ester **4** (61%, two steps). Iodination of the hydroxy group in **4** and subsequent reduction with DIBAL afforded the allylic alcohol **6**. The hydroxy group in **6** was protected to provide the THP ether **7** (71%, three steps). The alkylation reaction¹² of cycloheptanone *N,N*-dimethylhydrazone with **7** (*n*-BuLi) followed by hydrolysis with silica gel¹³ gave the alkylated ketone **8** in 92% yield. Treatment of **8** with concentrated hydrochloric acid in 1,4-dioxane readily afforded the allylic chloride **9**¹⁴ (94%), which was treated with *t*-BuOK in *t*-BuOH to give the spiroketones **10a** (28%) and **10b** (43%).^{15,16} Allylation of **10a** with KHMDS and allyl iodide provided a 7:1 mixture of the allyl ketones **3** and **11** in 81% yield, which were separated by silica gel column chromatography. We could not determine the stereochemistry of **3** and **11** by the spectroscopic analysis, however, we predicted that the allylation of **10a** should occur from the less hindered side of the corresponding enolate, and the allyl ketone **3** should be predominantly obtained.

The ring-closing olefin metathesis of the allyl ketones **3** and **11** was investigated, respectively, and it was proved that this reaction required a relatively higher temperature. The allyl ketone **3** reacted with Grubbs' ruthenium catalyst in boiling toluene to give the tricycloketone **12** in 20% yield, whereas the ring-closing olefin metathesis of **11** gave the tricycloketone **13** in 76% yield. The tricycloketones **12** and **13** were catalytically hydrogenated to afford the previously reported compound **2**^{5c,17} (55%) and compound **14**¹⁸ (68%), respectively. Thus, the structures of **3** and **12** were confirmed.

In summary, we have synthesized *in,out*-tricyclo[7.4.1.0^{1,5}]tetradecan-14-one (**2**), the framework of ingenol, in 12 steps from γ -butyrolactone using a Grubbs' ring-closing metathesis. Application of this strategy to the total synthesis of ingenols is currently underway in our laboratory.

Acknowledgements

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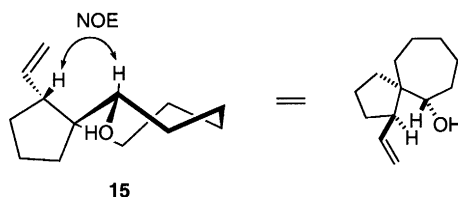


Scheme 2. Reagents and conditions. (a) DIBAL, toluene, -78°C , 1 h, 95%; (b) $\text{Ph}_3\text{P}=\text{CHCOOMe}$, benzene, 23°C , 1 h, 64%; (c) I_2 , Ph_3P , imidazole, toluene, 23°C , 1 h, 79%; (d) DIBAL, toluene, -78°C , 1 h; (e) DHP, *p*-TsOH, CH_2Cl_2 , 23°C , 1 h, 90% in two steps; (f) cycloheptanone *N,N*-dimethylhydrazone, *n*-BuLi, THF, 23°C , 2 h; (g) silica gel, CH_2Cl_2 , 23°C , 19 h, 92% in two steps; (h) conc. HCl, dioxane, 23°C , 5 h, 94%; (i) *t*-BuOK, *t*-BuOH, reflux, 3.5 h, 28% for **10a**, 43% for **10b**; (j) allyl iodide, KHMDS, THF, 0°C , 3 h, 81% (**3**:**11**=7:1); (k) $\text{RuCl}_2(=\text{CHPh})(\text{PCy}_3)_2$, toluene, reflux, 20% for **12**, 76% for **13**; (l) H_2 , Pd/C, EtOH, 23°C , 1 h, 55% for **2**, 68% for **14**

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- The global minima were calculated in a Multiconformer conformational search using MacroModel (Version 6.0).

11. All new compounds exhibited spectral (^1H NMR, ^{13}C NMR, IR, MS) and analytical (HRMS) data fully consistent with the assigned structures.
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14. Compound **9** was obtained as a mixture of α - and γ -allylic chlorides, which was employed for the next step without separation.
15. Although the reaction conditions for the spirocyclization were investigated, such as *t*-BuONa/*t*-BuOH, *t*-BuOLi/*t*-BuOH, NaH/toluene, BrMgN(*i*-Pr) $_2$ /THF, *t*-BuOK-KI/*t*-BuOH, and *t*-BuOK, 18-crown-6/*t*-BuOH, none of them were found to be more effective.
16. The stereochemistry of **10a** and **10b** was determined as follows. The spiroketone **10b** was reduced with NaBH $_4$ in EtOH to give alcohol **15** (39%) and its diastereomeric alcohol (37%). Alcohol **15** exhibited an NOE between the oxymethine proton and the allylic proton, suggesting that the oxymethine group and the vinyl group in **15** are on the opposite side of the cyclopentane ring to each other. This finding indicates that the carbonyl group and the vinyl group in **10b** are on the opposite side of the cyclopentane ring to each other and thus **10a** possesses the desired stereochemistry for the synthesis of **2**.



17. Compound **2**: IR (CHCl $_3$) 2945, 2860, 1720, 1450, 1380 cm $^{-1}$; ^1H NMR (270 MHz, CDCl $_3$) δ 2.88 (br tt, $J=11.9$, 2.0 Hz, 1 H), 2.04–0.86 (m, 21H); ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl $_3$) δ 217.0, 63.5, 54.3, 50.3, 41.1, 36.2, 35.0, 30.8, 30.6, 30.54, 30.51, 30.48, 26.0, 25.2; EIMS m/z 206 (M^+ , 100), 188 (21).
18. Compound **14**: IR (CHCl $_3$) 2930, 2860, 1680, 1460, 1360 cm $^{-1}$; ^1H NMR (270 MHz, CDCl $_3$) δ 2.73 (m, 1H), 2.19–2.12 (m, 2H), 1.95–1.17 (m, 19H); ^{13}C NMR (67.8 MHz, CDCl $_3$) δ 219.2, 63.4, 54.7, 43.3, 38.8, 35.0, 34.1, 34.0, 30.0, 28.7, 26.6, 26.3, 24.7, 20.9; EIMS m/z 206 (M^+ , 100), 188 (31); HREIMS calcd for C $_{14}$ H $_{22}$ O (M^+) 206.1671, found 206.1643.