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SAIKOSAPONINS FROM TAVERNIERA AEGYPTIACA

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Key Word Index-Taverniera aegyptiaca; Leguminosae; root bark; saikosaponins.

Abstract—By tracing the UV triplet of heteroannular dienes, three novel saikosaponins were isolated from the root bark of *Taverniera aegyptiaca*. They were identified as 22β -hydroxyolean-11,13(18)-dien- 3β -yl- β -D-glucopyranoside, 1β .22 β -dihydroxyolean-11,13(18)-dien- 3β -yl- β -D-glucopyranoside and 1β .22 β -dihydroxyolean-11,13(18)-dien- 3β -yl- β -D-glucopyranoside on the basis of chemical and spectral evidences. (C) 1998 Elsevier Science Ltd. All rights reserved

INTRODUCTION

Taverniera aegyptiaca Boiss is a plant common to the Red Sea coastal region of Egypt. The polar fraction of the methanol extract of the root bark of this plant contains a complicated mixture of hemolytic saponins. In a recent report [1] we described the isolation of novel oleanene saponins from the aforementioned fraction. Further chromatographic investigation of the saponins of this fraction revealed the presence of saponins related in their basic skeleton to the medicinally reputed saikosaponins of *Bupleurum* species (Umbelliferae) [2–6]. By tracing the UV absorption spectra of the column eluates, three novel saponins (1–3) were isolated, two of which have a new triterpene aglycone of the rare 1β -hydroxylation pattern.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Acid hydrolysis of saponins 2 and 3 afforded the same aglycone (4) besides D-glucose from 2 and D-glucose and D-xylose from 3 (TLC and GLC). The HRMS and DEPT ¹³C NMR spectra of 4 established the molecular formula as $C_{30}H_{48}O_3$. The ¹H NMR spectrum of 4 showed eight sharp three proton singlets at δ 0.75–1.02 and two olefinic protons at δ 6.29 (1H, dd, J = 10.2, 3 Hz; H₁₁) and 6.70 (1H, br d, J = 10.2 Hz; H₁₂). The UV spectrum of 4 revealed a hetero-annular diene triplet absorption at λ_{max}^{Med} 242, 251, 261 nm (log ε 4.42, 4.49, 4.27, respectively). These data together with the ¹³C NMR signals at δ 125.0, 131.2, 135.7 and 135.9 (Table 1) are indicative of olean- $\Delta^{11.13(18)}$ -diene system in 4 [7, 8].

The ¹H NMR spectrum of 4 also showed three axial carbinolic methine protons at δ 3.29 (1H, dd, J = 11.8, 4.6 Hz; H₃), 3.45 (1H, dd, J = 10, 7.4 Hz; H₂₂) and 3.56 (1H, dd, J = 11.2, 4.6 Hz; H₁) indicating the

This was confirmed by the DEPT ¹³C NMR CH signals at δ 75.6, 76.7 and 79.9 and also by the easy acetylation of 4 (Ac₂O-pyridine at 0° C) to give triacetate 4a having three ¹H NMR signals for acetoxyl methyl groups at δ 2.03, 2.04 and 2.05 (each 3H, s) and the shift of $[M^+]$ from m/z 456 in 4 to m/z 582 in 4a. One of these hydroxyl functions could be unambiguously located at C-22 following observation of downfield shifts of C-21 and C-17 and of an upfield shift of C-28 due to a γ gauche effect. Resonances of C-6, C-7, C-15 and C-16 were comparable with those of the corresponding carbon of a series of saikogenins and other related sapogenins [8]. This conclusion was further confirmed by 'H-'H COSY, HMQC and HMBC of 4a where significant correlations were observed between H-22 and C-17, C-20, C-21 and C-28 (Fig. 1).

equatorial nature of the three hydroxyl groups in 4.

The HRMS of 4 showed an intense fragment (100%) at m/z 235.1694 calculated for C₁₅H₂₃O₂ and pertaining to rings A, B and C. A vicinal glycol in 4 was excluded since Jones oxidation of 4 gave triketone derivative 4b which exhibited β -diketone IR absorption bands at v_{max}^{KBr} 1700 and 1725 cm⁻¹ and an extra UV maximum at $\lambda_{\text{max}}^{\text{MeOH}}$ 257 nm undergoing a 32 nm bathochromic shift in the presence of NaOH and indicating a 1,3 dione system [9, 10]. This is possible only in ring A of normal pentacyclic triterpenes. This conclusion was confirmed by the comparison of the ¹³C NMR spectra of 4 and related compounds [8] where downfield shifts of C-2 and C-10 (10 and 4.3 ppm, respectively) and upfield shifts of C-25 and C-5 (1.7 and 3.4 ppm, respectively) were observed. The presence of the 1,3-dihydroxy system of ring A was finally confirmed from ¹H-¹H COSY of 4a where cross peaks occurred between H-1 and H-3 and two proton multiplets centered at δ 1.8 and 1.98 (each 1H, m, 2H₂) and

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Table 1. DEPT ¹³C-NMR analysis of compounds 1-5

Carbon no.	1	5	2	3	4	4a
1	38.2	37.8	76.7	76.8	76.7	80.7
2	25.6	27.9	35.3	35.1	37.5	30.0
3	89.0	78.3	89.0	88.9	79.6	77.2
4	39.1	38.9	39.0	38.9	39.3	37.9
5	55.1	55.2	51.9	51.8	51.8	52.2
6	18.7	18.6	18.4	18.3	18.3	17.2
7	32.4	32.5	32.2	32.1	32.2	32.2
8	40.7	40.5	40.6	40.7	40.6	40.0
9	54.9	54.7	54.3	54.3	54.6	54.0
10	36.9	36.8	41.0	41.2	41.0	41.0
1	126.2	126.2	126.2	126.2	125.0	126.2
2	125.2	125.2	131.0	131.1	131.2	128.0
3	135.9	135.8	135.8	135.8	135.9	135.5
4	42.5	42.4	42.4	42.3	42.3	42.2
5	34.4	34.2	32.3	32.2	32.2	32.3
6	24.8	24.7	24.8	24.6	24.6	24.0
7	43.1	43.0	43.0	42.9	42.9	41.3
8	135.8	135.8	135.8	135.7	135.7	135.5
9	38.7	38.7	38.9	38.9	38.9	37.3
20	33.2	33.4	33.4	33.2	33.5	32.1
21	44.5	44.3	44.3	44.4	44.4	39.0
2	75.5	75.5	75.6	75.6	75.6	79.5
23	27.4	27.8	27.9	27.8	28.3	27.9
24	15.0	15.1	15.7	15.6	15.5	16.0
15	18.5	18.4	14.9	14.8	14.9	14.9
26	17.4	17.2	17.1	17.0	17.0	16.7
.7	25.2	25.2	18.3	18.3	18.3	19.3
8	20.6	20.5	20.4	20.3	20.3	19.9
.9	25.0	25.1	24.9	24.9	25.0	25.0
80	32.6	32.4	32.4	32.5	32.4	32.4
nner sugar moiety						
1'	105.6		105.4	102.9		AcCO at C_1 169.9
2'	75.5		75.2	82.1		AcCO at C 21.0
	78.1		77.9	76.3		$\overline{\text{AcCO}}$ at C ₃ 170.6
4´	71.7		71.7	71.5		$Ac\overline{CO}$ at $C_3 = 21.3$
5'	78.3		78.2	78.2		\overrightarrow{AcCO} at C ₂₂ 170.3
6′	62.8		62.7	62.7		AcCO at C_{22} 21.7
erminal sugar moie						
1′	•			106.7		
2'				76.5		
3'				78.0		
4′				71.2		
5'				67.2		

from HMBC of 4a where significant correlations were found between H-1 and H-3 and C-2. Other confirmatory correlations are shown in Fig. 2. The structure of 4 was then deduced to be 1β , 3β , 22β -trihydroxyolean-11,13(18)-diene which is a new aglycone.

It is interesting to note that H-12 and C-12 are downfield shifted in 4 in comparison with spectra of 5 and other saikogenins (ca 1.1, 6 ppm, respectively). These effects may be caused by 1β -hydroxylation and are lost from the ¹H NMR spectrum after acetylation (see Experimental and Table 1).

Acid hydrolysis of saponin 1 afforded D-glucose and aglycone 5. The molecular formula of 5 was estab-

lished as $C_{30}H_{48}O_2$ (HRMS and ¹³C NMR). Its spectral analysis (MS, UV, ¹H and ¹³C NMR) showed that it is closely related to 4 but with one less hydroxy function. Comparison of the ¹H NMR spectrum of 5 with that of 4 showed an upfield shift of H-3 (0.04 ppm) and H-12 (1.13 ppm) and an identical position of H-22 indicating the absence of the 1 β -hydroxy function in 5. The ¹³C NMR spectrum of 5 (Table 1) further confirmed this conclusion by revealing normal ring A hydroxylation at C-3 only. Thus the structure of 5 was established at 1 β ,22 β dihydroxyolean-11,13(18)-diene which is also a new aglycone.

The negative FAB-mass spectrum of 1 afforded a

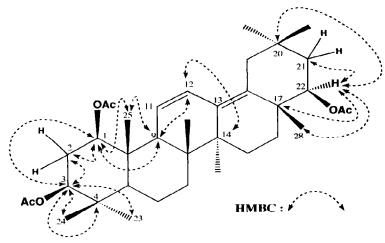
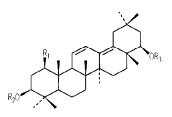


Fig. 1.



Compound	\mathbf{R}_{1}	R ₂	R ₃
1	Н	H β-D-glucose	
2	β-ОН	β-D-glucose	Н
3	β-ОН	β -D-xylose (1 \rightarrow 2)	н
		β-D-glucose	
4	β-ОН	Н	Н
4a	OAC	AC	Ac
5	н	Н	Н
5a	Н	AC	Ac
		Fig. 2.	

quasi molecular anion peak at m/z 601[M – H⁺]⁻ and a further peak at m/z 439 assigned for loss of the glucose moiety. The ¹H NMR and ¹³C NMR spectra of 1 showed the anomeric proton and carbon of a β -D-glucopyranoside structure at δ 4.51; (1H, d, J = 7.5Hz) and δ 105.4 respectively. Glycosylation was assigned to C-3 of 5 due to the downfield shift of C-3 and upfield shift of C-2 in comparison with its aglycone 5 (see Table 1). As such its structure was deduced as 3β -O- β -D-glucopyranosylolean-11,13(18)-diene- 3β ,22 β -diol.

Similarly the structure of saponin **2** was deduced as $3\beta - O - \beta - D$ - glucopyranosylolean - 11,13(18) - diene - 1β , 3β , 22β -triol (see Table 1 and Experimental).

Saponin 3 showed a molecular formula $C_{41}H_{66}O_{12}$ (FAB-mass spectrum and DEPT ¹³C NMR). The

negative FAB-mass spectrum of 3 revealed a quasi molecular anion at m/z 749 [(M-H⁺]⁻ and further peaks at m/z 617 and m/z 455 assigned for successive losses of one xylose and one glucose and one xylose units respectively from the $[M-H^+]^-$ peak. The ¹H NMR spectrum of 3 displayed signals for two β anomeric protons at δ 4.53 (1H, d, J = 7.5 Hz) and at δ 4.60 (1H, d, J = 8 Hz). Comparison of the ¹³C NMR spectrum of 3 with that of 2 (Table 1) showed the downfield shift of C-2 of glucose (6.9 ppm), upfield shift of both C-1 and C-3 (2.5 and 1.6 ppm, respectively) indicating that the terminal β -D-xylosyl moiety was linked to C-2 of β -D-glucose [11, 12]. As in 1 and 2, glycosylation was also assigned to C-3 of 4 [see Table 1]. The structure of 3 was established therefore as 3β -O- β -D-xylopyranosyl($1 \rightarrow 2$)- β - ν -glucopyranosylolean-11,13(18)diene-1 β ,3 β ,22 β -triol.

It is pertinent to mention that saponins with a related basic skeleton have been reported to exhibit antiviral, cytotoxic, anti-inflammatory, anti-hepatotoxic and plasma cholesterol lowering activities [2-6]. They have been previously found in Bupleurum species [Umbelliferae] [3, 7, 13, 14], Corchorous acutangulus (Tiliaceae) [15], Polycarpone loeffingiae (Caryophyllaceae) [16], Verbascum songaricum (Scrophulariaceae) [17], Glycyrrhiza yunnanensis and G. uralensis (Leguminosae) [18-20], Phyllanthus flexuosus (Euphorbiaceae) [21], Clinopodium polycephalum (Labiatae) [22] and Prunella vulgaris (Labiatae) [23]. Finally the occurrence of diene saponins without a function on C-28 is rare and has been previously isolated only once from G. uralensis [20]. Also the rare 1β -hydroxylation in triterpenes has been encountered so far only in anagadiol [24] although the 1a-pattern was encountered in imberbic acid [10].

EXPERIMENTAL

Plant material, method of extraction and instruments have been described in previous work [1]. Mps: uncorr.; 'NMR of aglycones in CDCl₃ and for glycosides in pyridine- d_5 . TLC was carried out on precoated silica gel sheets "E-Merck" with the following systems (A) CHCl₃-MeOH (99:1), (B) CHCl₃-MeOH (92:8), (C) CHCl₃-MeOH (80:20), (D) CHCl₃-MeOH-H₂O (65:30:6.5), (E) acetonitrile-H₂O (85:15).

The saponin fraction (50 g) was fractionated on silica gel CC using a CHCl₃-MeOH gradient. Fraction collection was monitored by UV and TLC using systems (C) and (D) and only fractions showing UV absorption characteristics of heretoannular dienes were subjected to further investigation. Elution with CHCl₃-MeOH (90:10) afforded a mixture of three saponins (380 mg) HR_F 80, 75, 65 on system C. Further investigation of this mixture on silica gel CC afforded 1 (75 mg) HR_F 75 on system C and 2 (120) mg) HR_F 65 on the same system. Elution with CHCl₃-MeOH (65:35) afforded a mixture of two saponins (800 mg) HR_F 63, 60 on system D. Final separation of 3 was achieved on RP₁₈ CC using MeOH-H₂O (3:7) to give 3 as an amorphous powder (250 mg) HR_F 60 on system D. The other component of this fraction is still under investigation.

Acid hydrolysis of saponins 1-2

Each glycoside (30 mg) was refluxed with 10 ml 1 M aq. TFA for 2 h. The solns were then evaporated separately under vacuum, sugars were extracted with 2 ml H₂O and identified by TLC (using system E) and GLC through their alditol acetates using the procedure of Ref. [25]. Saponin 1 and 2 yielded D-glucose while 3 afforded D-xylose and D-glucose. Moreover, compound 1 afforded the aglycone 5 while 2 and 3 afforded the aglycone 4.

Jones oxidation of 4

Compound 4 (20 mg) was dissolved in 1 ml pyridine and oxidized with CrO₃ in pyridine (250 mg in 6 ml). The soln was agitated for 3 h at 0°C and filtered, diluted with H₂O and extracted with Et₂O. The residue obtained was purified by silica gel CC to give **4b** mp 136–139°C, IR v^{KBr}_{max} cm⁻¹: 1725, 1700 (β -diketo), 1695 (C₂₂ keto). UV λ^{MeOH}_{max} nm: 245, 251, 257, 263, (log ε 4.42, 4.47, 4.51, 4.27), $\lambda^{MeOH/NaOH}_{max}$ nm: 242, 251, 261, 289.

Acetylation of 4 and 5

Compounds 4 (10 mg) and 5 (5 mg) were acetylated with Ac₂O-pyridine. The acetates 4a and 5a were precipitated by addition of H₂O, and crystallized from MeOH to give 4a as needles mp 258–260°C and 5a as amorphous powder mp 156–58°C.

Preparation of alditol acetates [25]

The aq. soln of each hydrolysed glycoside (2 ml) was reduced by 1 ml of 2% NaBH₄ in 0.1 ml 1N NH₃ at 60°C for 90 min. It was then acetylated with 2 ml Ac₂O using 0.2 ml of 1-methyl imidazole as catalyst. The alditol acetates were extracted from the reaction mixture with CH₂Cl₂ and subjected to GLC.

Compound 1. Amorphous powder (MeOH), mp 175-179°C, HR_F 75 on system C. Positive FABMS m/z: 603 [M+H⁺]⁺; negative FABMS m/z: 601 [M-H⁺]⁻, 439 [M-H⁺-glucose]⁻. ¹H NMR: δ 6.40 (1H, dd, J = 10.7, 3.1 Hz, H-11), 5.59 (1H, br d, J = 10.7 Hz, H-12), 4.51 (1H, d, J = 7.5 Hz, H-1 glucose). ¹³C NMR: see Table 1.

Compound 2. Needles from MeOH, mp 207-209°C, HR_F65 on system C. Positive FABMS m/z: 619 $(M+H^+)^+$, 439 $[M-H^+-glucose-H_2O]^+$. Negative FABMS m/z: 617 $[M-H^+]^-$, 455 $[M-H^+-glu$ $cose]^-$, 437 $[M-H^+-glucose-H_2O]^-$. ¹H NMR: δ 6.76 (1H, dd, J = 10.2, 1 Hz, H-12), 6.35 (1H, dd, J = 10.2, 3 Hz, H-11), 4.56 (1H, d, J = 7.5 Hz, anomeric H-1' of glucose. ¹³C NMR: see Table 1.

Compound 3. Amorphous powder mp 196–198°C (MeOH). Positive FABMS m/z: 751 (M + H⁺)⁺, 439 [M + H⁺ - xylose - glucose - H₂O]⁺. Negative FABMS m/z: 749 [M - H⁺]⁻, 617 [M - H⁺ - xylose]⁻, 455 [M - H⁺ - xylose - glucose]⁻, 437 [M - H⁺ - xylose - glucose - H₂O]⁻. ¹H NMR: δ 6.76 (1H, br d, J = 10.1 Hz, H-12), 6.36 (1H, dd, J = 10.1, 3 Hz, H-11), 4.60 (1H, d, J = 8 Hz), 4.53 (1H, d, J = 7.5 Hz). ¹³C NMR see Table 1.

Identification of compound **4**. Mp 268-270°C (MeOH). HR_F 75 on system B. IR ν_{max}^{KBr} cm ¹: 3550 3150 br, 3020, 2980, 2960, 2880, 2870, 1660, 1640, 1475, 1400, 1370, 1320, 1300, 1090, 1040, 1030, 1000, 985, 940, 650. HRMS *m/z* (rel. int): 456.35965 (4) calcd for C₃₀H₄₈O₃ (required 456.36035), 438 (25), 423 (8), 420 (6), 405 (5), 235.16949 (100) calcd for C₁₅H₂₃O₂ (required 235.16980), 221 (2), 219 (15), 218 (20), 217

(9), 215 (28). ¹H NMR (CDCl₃): δ 0.75, 0.77, 0.80, 0.98 (3 Me), 0.99, 1.02 (8 Me groups), 3.29 (1H, dd, J = 11.8, 4.6 Hz; H-3), 3.45 (1H, dd, J = 10, 7.4 Hz, H-22), 3.56 (1H, dd, J = 11.2, 4.6 Hz, H-1), 6.29 (1H, dd, J = 10.2, 3 Hz, H-11), 6.70 (1H, br d, J = 10.2 Hz, H-12). ¹³C NMR: see Table 1.

Triacetate **4a**. Mp 258–260°C. HRMS m/z (rel. in.): 582 (19.3), 522 (100), 462 (42), 402 (3.2), 327 (11.3), 201 (40). ¹H NMR: δ 0.73, 0.86 (3 Me), 0.98, 1.08, 1.09 (8 Me groups), 1.8, 1.98 (each 1H, m, 2H₂) 2.03, 2.04, 2.05 (each 3H, s, 3 acetoxyl groups), 2.18 (1H, d, J = 2.9 Hz, H-9) 4.61 (1H, dd, J = 12.2, 4.6 Hz, H-3 α), 4.72 (1H, dd, J = 9.8, 7.5 Hz, H-22 α), 4.77 (1H, dd, J = 11.4, 4.6 Hz, H-1 α), 5.83 (1H, dd, J = 10.9, 1 Hz, H-12), 6.27 (1H, dd, J = 10.9, 2.9 Hz, H-11); ¹³C NMR see Table 1.

Compound **5**. Mp 220–222°C, HR_F 66 (system A), HRMS m/z (rel. int.): 440.3664 (100) for C₃₀H₂₈O, required 440.3654, 425 (8.9), 422 (3.8), 270 (6.4), 245 (12.8), 231 (17.9), 220 (10.2). ¹H NMR: δ 0.72, 0.78, 0.80, 0.89, 0.95, 0.99 (2 Me), 1.02 (8 Me groups), 3.24 (1H, dd, J = 10.7, 5.6 Hz, H-3), 3.45 (1H, dd, J = 9.8, 7.6 Hz, H-22), 5.57 (1H, br d, J = 10.6, 1 Hz, H-12), 6.34 (1H, dd, J = 10.7, 2.7 Hz, H-11), ¹³C NMR: see Table 1.

Compound **5a**. Mp 156–158°C, HRMS *m/z* (rel. int): 524 (100%), 464 (15), 404 (2), 368 (6), 273 (12.5), 227 (16.2), 213 (12.5), 201 (25).

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