Ethyl 6-Bromo-3-indolcarboxylate and 3-Hydroxyacetal-6-bromoindole, Novel Bromoindoles from the Sponge *Pleroma menoui* of the Coral Sea

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The demosponge *Pleroma menoui* (order Lithistida, suborder Trienosina (= Desmophorina), family Pleromidae), collected in the Coral Sea south-east of Noumea at a depth of 500 m, is proven here to contain the novel alkaloids ethyl 6-bromo-3-indolcarboxylate and 3-hydroxyacetyl-6-bromoindole.

Introduction

Indoles substituted by bromine at either C(3), C(5), or the non-electrophilic C(6) have been isolated from marine animals. Thus, the hemichordate *Psychodera flava laysanica* has given 3-bromoindole [1] and 3,6-dibromoindole [2] while the sponge *Smenospongia aurea* has given 5-bromo- and 5,6-dibromo-N,N-dimethyltryptamine [3]. 6-Bromoisodes have been isolated from the bryozoan *Flustra foliacea* [4], from the sponges *Ciona celata* [5], *Iotrochota* sp. [6] and *Aplysinopsis reticulata* [7], and from scleractinian corals of the family Dendrophylliidae [8]. Moreover, 6-bromo-3-indolines are products of prosobranch mollusks and form the basis of Tyrian purple [9].

We report here on two novel 6-bromoindoles and a previously known 6-bromoindole [8], isolated from the sponge *Pleroma menoui* (order Lithistida, suborder Trienosina (= Desmophorina), family Pleromidae) from the Coral Sea.

Results and Discussion

The first compound isolated from the sponge was the less polar 1 whose spectral data suggested a 6-bromo-3-substituted indole [8]. The ethyl ester group revealed by the spectral data must thus be located at C(3). The structure ethyl 6-bromo-3-indolcarboxylate (1) for this compound was confirmed by oxidation of the previously available compound 3 [8] (which was also isolated from *P. menoui* as the next

![Scheme](image)

Scheme. i) a) PCC, CH$_2$C1$_2$; b) EtOH. ii) KMnO$_4$, 1:1 (CH$_3$)$_2$CO—H$_2$O, room temperature, 48 h. iii) DCC, DMPA, EtOH, 24 h.

more polar compound) to acid 5 which was then esterified to 1 (Scheme). Before this firm structural proof, under the hypothesis of a weak $^1$C NMR C=O signal, we deemed structure 4 also compatible with the spectral data in the Experimental for the compound isolated from the sponge. This was ruled out by comparison with an authentic sample of 4 prepared from 2 via route i as described in the Experimental.

The next more polar compound isolated from this sponge was 2. The composition C$_{10}$H$_8$BrNO$_2$ was established by mass and NMR spectral analysis. Its indole nature, and the presence of an alcoholic functional group, were revealed by its UV and IR data. Bromine substitution at C(6) and the carbon chain at C(3) were established by comparison of its NMR data with those for aplysinopsins [8]. The structure of the side-chain was confirmed by PCC oxidation of 2 and esterification to give 4 (Experimental).
Experimental

General experimental procedures

Melting points: Kofler hot-stage microscope. NMR spectra (δ values in ppm relative to internal Me$_2$Si (δ = 0 ppm) and J values in Hz): Varian XL-300 spectrometer (1H at 300 MHz, 13C at 75.4 MHz, J in Hz, multiplicities from APT [10]. MS (EI; m/z (%)), Varian early Lambda-3 spectrophotometer. IR spectra: Perkin-Elmer 337 spectrometer (v$_{max}$ in cm$^{-1}$). Reverse-phase HPLC: 25 x 1 cm column filled with Merck LiChroprep RP-8 (7 nm); HPLC: 25 x 1 cm column filled with Merck LiChrosorb Si-60 (7 nm), UV monitoring at 254 nm, solvent flux 5 ml min$^{-1}$. Flash chromatography: Merck Kieselgel 60, 15–25 μm. TLC: Merck SiF$_2$54 plates.

Collection and isolation

The sponge was collected by dredging in September 1985 south-east of Noumea at a depth of 500 m and was identified by Professor C. Levi. The fresh sponge was lyophilized and then extracted with 80% EtOH. The extract was partly evaporated and fresh sponge was lyophilized and then extracted with 500 ml and was identified by Professor C. Levi. The extract was then subjected to preparative silica-gel TLC with 2:3 hexane—AcOEt to give a dark sticky residue (1.18 g) which was subjected to flash chromatography on 20 g of SiO$_2$ with hexane/AcOEt gradient elution, collecting 20 fractions of 50 ml each. The sixth fraction was evaporated and the residue was subjected to reverse-phase HPLC with CH$_3$CN/H$_2$O 62/38 obtaining pure 1 (15 mg) at t$_R$ = 8.2 min. Similar work-up of the eighth flash chromatographic fraction with CH$_3$CN/H$_2$O 42/58 led to pure 3 (32 mg, t$_R$ = 9.3 min).

Flash-chromatographic fractions 13 and 14 were evaporated and then first subjected to reverse-phase HPLC with CH$_3$CN/H$_2$O 3/7 and then the fraction containing product 2 was further subjected to HPLC with hexane/AcOEt 1/3 to give pure 2 (12 mg, t$_R$ = 7.1 min).

Ethyl 6-bromo-3-indolcarboxylate (1)

Colorless microcrystalline powder, m.p. 147–149 °C (MeOH). $^1$H NMR ((CD$_3$)$_2$CO) δ 11.09 (br. s, NH), 8.04 (d, J = 2.8, H-C(2)), 8.05 (dd, J = 8.5, 0.6, H-C(4)), 7.34 (dd, J = 8.5, 1.8, H-C(5)), 7.74 (dd, J = 1.8, 0.6, H-C(7)), 4.32 (q, J = 7.2, 2H-C(2')), 1.37 (t, J = 7.2, 3H-C(3')). $^{13}$C NMR ((CD$_3$)$_2$CO) δ 133.28 (d, C(2)), 130.84 (s, C(3)), 126.11 (s, C(3a)), 123.42 (d, C(4)), 125.25 (d, C(5)), 116.41 (s, C(6)), 115.86 (d, C(7)), 138.47 (s, C(7a)), 164.90 (s, C(1')), 60.00 (t, C(2')), 14.84 (q, C(3')). MS: 269–267 (45, M$^+$), 241–239 (27, M$^+$–28), 224–222 (100, M$^+$–OCH$_2$CH$_3$).

Synthesis of ethyl 6-bromo-3-indolcarboxylate (1)

6-Bromoindol-3-carboxaldehyde (2) (5 mg, 0.02 mmol) was stirred with 6 molar equivalents of PCC in 1 ml of CH$_2$Cl$_2$, whereby all 2 disappeared. The mixture was added of 2 ml of EtOH and, after 1 h, it was filtered on silica gel Si-60 (15–25 μm). The filtrate was evaporated and the residue was subjected to HPLC with hexane/AcOEt 3/2 to give 1.8 mg of pure 4 (t$_R$ = 6.1 min). M.p. 240–242 °C (lit. [14] 241–242 °C). $^1$H NMR ((CD$_3$)$_2$CO) δ 11.48 (br. s, NH), 8.50 (br. s, H-C(2)), 8.23 (d, J = 8.5, H-C(4)), 7.45 (dd, J = 8.5, 1.9, H-C(5)), 7.70 (d, J = 1.8, H-C(7)), 4.39 (q, J = 7.2, 2H-C(3'))). 1.38 (t, J = 7.2, 3H-C(4')).

3-Hydroxyacetil-6-bromoindole (2)

3-Hydroxyacetil-6-bromoindole (2) (5 mg, 0.02 mmol) was stirred with 6 molar equivalents of PCC in 1 ml of CH$_2$Cl$_2$, whereby all 2 disappeared. The mixture was added of 2 ml of EtOH and, after 1 h, it was filtered on silica gel Si-60 (15–25 μm). The filtrate was evaporated and the residue was subjected to HPLC with hexane/AcOEt 3/2 to give 1.8 mg of pure 4 (t$_R$ = 6.1 min). M.p. 240–242 °C (lit. [14] 241–242 °C). $^1$H NMR ((CD$_3$)$_2$CO) δ 11.48 (br. s, NH), 8.50 (br. s, H-C(2)), 8.23 (d, J = 8.5, H-C(4)), 7.45 (dd, J = 8.5, 1.9, H-C(5)), 7.70 (d, J = 1.8, H-C(7)), 4.39 (q, J = 7.2, 2H-C(3'))). 1.38 (t, J = 7.2, 3H-C(4')).

3-Hydroxyacetyl-6-bromoindole (2)

Colorless microcrystalline powder, m.p. 194–196 °C (MeOH). UV $\lambda_{max}$ 293 (9200), 265 (12200), 242 (13100), 217 (24100); IR (KBr) 3420s, 3250s, 1650s, 1635s; $^1$H NMR ((CD$_3$)$_2$CO) δ 11.29 (br. s, NH), 8.34 (d, J = 2.9, H-C(2)), 8.20 (dd, J = 8.4, 0.6, H-C(4)), 7.37 (dd, J = 8.4, 1.8, H-C(5)), 7.74 (dd, J = 1.8, 0.6, H-C(7)), 4.32 (q, J = 7.2, 2H-C(2')), 1.37 (t, J = 7.2, 3H-C(3'))
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7.74 (dd, J = 1.8, 0.6, H-C(7)), 4.71 (s, 2H-C(2')). $^{13}$C NMR ((CD$_3$)$_2$CO) $\delta$ 134.16 (d, C(2)), 114.41 (s, C(3)), 125.58 (s, C(3a)), 123.92 (d, C(4)), 125.94 (d, C(5)), 116.96 (s, C(6)), 115.83 (d, C(7)), 138.44 (s, C(7a)), 194.59 (s, C(1')), 66.00 (t, C(2')). MS: 255–253 (9, M$^+$), 224–222 (100, M$^+$ – CH$_2$OH), 196–194 (20, M$^+$ – COCH$_2$OH).

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