

Planta Medica

Journal of Medicinal Plant and Natural Product Research

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Rüdigerstraße 14
D-70469 Stuttgart
Postfach 30 11 20
D-70451 Stuttgart

Thieme Publishers
333 Seventh Avenue
New York, NY 10001, USA
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Report Documentation Page

Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

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1. REPORT DATE SEP 2011		2. REPORT TYPE		3. DATES COVERED 00-00-2011 to 00-00-2011	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Triterpenoidal Saponins: Bioactive Secondary Metabolites from Zygophyllum coccineum				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S)				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) University of Mississippi, USDA, Agricultural Research Service, Natural Products Utilization Research Unit, University, MS, 38677				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution unlimited					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT Phytochemical investigation of the aerial parts of Zygophyllum coccineum L. led to the isolation of nine ursane-type triterpene saponins (1-9), including the new one; zygophylloside S (1), together with a known flavonoid glycoside (10) and a sterol glycoside (11). The isolated compounds were tested for antifungal activity against several important plant pathogens and for insecticidal activity against two important mosquito species. Among the isolated compounds 1, 3, 5, 6, and 9 showed 32-77% fungal growth inhibition at a concentration of 30 µg/ml against Phomopsis viticola. Compound 9 showed 90% and 80% mosquitocidal activity at 3.1 µg/0.5 µl against Aedes aegypti and Culex quinquefasciatus, respectively.					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT unclassified	b. ABSTRACT unclassified	c. THIS PAGE unclassified			

Triterpenoidal Saponins: Bioactive Secondary Metabolites from *Zygophyllum coccineum*

Elham Amin^{1,5}, Seham S. El-Hawary², Magda M. Fathy², Rabab Mohammed¹, Zulfiqar Ali⁵, Nurhayat Tabanca³, David E. Wedge³, James J. Becnel⁴, Ikhlas A. Khan⁵

¹ Faculty of Pharmacy, Beni Suef University, Beni Suef, Egypt

² Faculty of Pharmacy, Cairo University, Cairo, Egypt

³ U. S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service, Natural Products Utilization Research Unit, University of Mississippi, University, MS, USA

⁴ USDA, ARS, Center for Medical, Agricultural, and Veterinary Entomology Gainesville, Gainesville, FL, USA

⁵ National Center for Natural Products Research, University of Mississippi, University, MS, USA

Abstract

Phytochemical investigation of the aerial parts of *Zygophyllum coccineum* L. led to the isolation of nine ursane-type triterpene saponins (1–9), including the new one; zygophylloside S (1), together with a known flavonoid glycoside (10) and a sterol glycoside (11). The isolated compounds were tested for antifungal activity against several important plant pathogens and for insecticidal activity against two important mosquito species. Among the isolated compounds 1, 3, 5, 6, and 9 showed 32–77% fungal growth inhibition at a concentration of 30 μM against *Phomopsis viticola*. Compound 9 showed 90% and 80% mosquitocidal activity at 3.1 μg/0.5 μL against *Aedes aegypti* and *Culex quinquefasciatus*, respectively.

Key words

Zygophyllum coccineum L. · Zygophyllaceae · ursane-type triterpene glycosides · zygophylloside S · antifungal activity · insecticidal activity

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Saponins are widely distributed in the plant kingdom and have a wide range of biological properties. Several investigations have reported the anti-inflammatory, antibacterial, antifungal, anti-parasitic, antiviral, hemolytic, and cytotoxic activities of saponins [1]. As a part of a research program aimed at identifying new natural fungicides and insecticides, *Z. coccineum* L., a saponin-rich plant, was chosen for further investigation.

Z. coccineum L., Zygophyllaceae, grows wild in Egyptian deserts [2]. It has been used in traditional medicine as antihelminthic, diuretic, antidiabetic, antiasthma, antigout, antirheumatic, and antihypertension agents [3–5].

Zygophylloside S (1) was isolated as a white powder from the *n*-butanol-soluble part of the methanol extract by repeated flash and gravity column chromatography over normal and reversed phase (RP-18) silica gel. The HR-ESI-MS exhibited an [M + Na]⁺ ion at *m/z* = 803.4166 (calcd. 803.4097) that is consistent with the molecular formula C₄₁H₆₄O₁₄. The ¹H-NMR spectrum of 1 displayed resonances for four tertiary methyls [δ_{H} = 0.88 (s), 1.06 (s),

1.10 (s), 1.14 (s)], two secondary methyls [δ_{H} = 0.82 (d, *J* = 6.4 Hz) and 1.23 (d, *J* = 6.0 Hz)], an olefin proton [δ_{H} = 6.01 (s)], and an oxygenated methine [δ_{H} = 3.15 (dd, *J* = 12.0, 4.0 Hz)]. The ¹³C-NMR spectrum showed 41 resonances, including characteristic ones at δ_{C} = 180.4 and 178.3 due to two carboxy groups and at δ_{C} = 134.4 and 129.3 due to a double bond. The DEPT-135 experiment allowed differentiation of the 41 carbon resonances into six methyl, 11 methylene, 16 methine, and 8 quaternary carbons, of which 6 methyl, 9 methylene, 7 methine, and 8 quaternary carbons were attributed to the aglycon moiety. This data indicated an ursane-type triterpene skeleton for the aglycon, with a classical olefin bond at C-12, and two carboxy groups at C-27 and C-28, corresponding to quinovic acid [6]. In addition, the ¹H- and ¹³C-NMR spectra showed resonances for two sugar units, assignable to β -glucopyranose [δ_{H} = 4.76 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, H-1'); δ_{C} = 105.3 (C-1'), 84.2 (C-2'), 78.5 (C-3'), 71.9 (C-4'), 78.2 (C-5') and 63.1 (C-6')] and α -arabinopyranose [δ_{H} = 5.14 (d, *J* = 6.8 Hz, H-1''); δ_{C} = 106.9 (C-1''), 74.0 (C-2''), 74.6 (C-3''), 69.5 (C-4'') and 67.3 (C-5'')]. The long-range HMBCs observed from H-1' to C-3 and from H-1'' to C-2' revealed that the glucose was linked at C-3 and the arabinose at C-2'. The aglycone was recognized from the aforementioned ¹H- and ¹³C-NMR data (Table 1) as 3 β -hydroxyurs-12-ene-27,28-dioic acid. The assignment of the ¹H- and ¹³C-NMR data was facilitated by comparison with those of *Zygophyllum* saponins [6–11] and confirmed by HMQC, HMBC (Fig. 1), and COSY spectra. Accordingly, zygophylloside S (1) was elucidated as 3-*O*-[α -L-arabinopyranosyl-(1 → 2)- β -D-glucopyranosyl] quinovic acid [12].

By comparing their spectral and physical data with those of known compounds reported in the literature [6–11, 13], compounds 2–11 were characterized as 3-*O*-[β -D-(2-*O*-sulphonyl)-quinovopyranosyl] quinovic acid (2), 3-*O*-[β -D-glucopyranosyl] quinovic acid (3), 3-*O*-[β -D-glucopyranosyl] quinovic acid-28-*O*- β -D-glucopyranosyl ester (4), 3-*O*-[β -D-quinovopyranosyl] quinovic acid-28-*O*- β -D-glucopyranosyl ester (5), 3-*O*-[α -L-arabinopyranosyl-(1 → 2)- β -D-quinovopyranosyl] quinovic acid (6), 3-*O*-[α -L-arabinopyranosyl-(1 → 2)- β -D-quinovopyranosyl] quinovic acid-28-*O*- β -D-glucopyranosyl ester (7), 3-*O*-[β -D-(2-*O*-sulphonyl)quinovopyranosyl] quinovic acid-28-*O*- β -D-glucopyranosyl ester (8), and 3-*O*-[β -D-(2-*O*-sulphonyl)glucopyranosyl] quinovic acid (9), isorhamnetin-3-*O*-rutinoside (10), and β -sitosterolglucoside (11).

The antifungal activity of the compounds was investigated against *Colletotrichum acutatum*, *C. fragariae*, *C. gloeosporioides*, *Botrytis cinerea*, *Phomopsis obscurans*, *P. viticola*, and *Fusarium oxysporum* and was observed against *P. viticola* after 144 h exposure. Among the isolated compounds, compound 6 showed 76.9% ± 3.7% fungal growth inhibition at 30 μM, followed by compounds 1 (55.6% ± 4.0%), 5 (54.1% ± 7.7%), 3 (44.3% ± 6.2%), and 9 (31.5% ± 7.0%) (Fig. 2), while captan used as the standard showed growth inhibition of 99.9% ± 0.3%.

Isolated compounds were subjected to a high-throughput larval bioassay with *Aedes aegypti* and evaluated for adult toxicity against *A. aegypti* and *Culex quinquefasciatus*. Although no mortality was observed with any of the compounds against first instar larvae of *A. aegypti*, compound 9 exhibited significant adult mortality of 90% and 80% at 3.1 μg/0.5 μL concentration against *A. aegypti* and *C. quinquefasciatus*, respectively. This is the first report of the antifungal and insecticidal activity of compounds 1, 3, 5, 6, and 9.

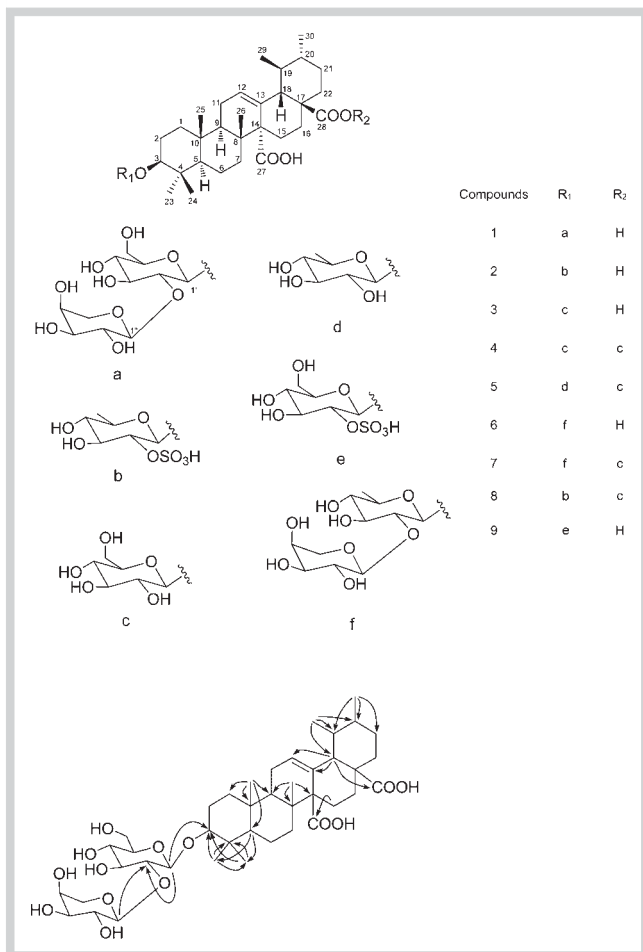


Fig. 1 HMBCs of zygophylloside S (1).

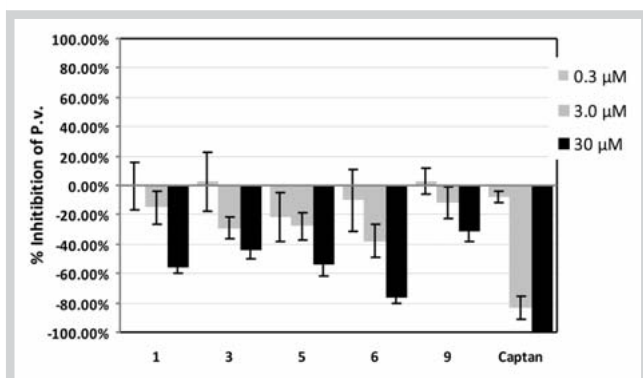


Fig. 2 Growth inhibition of compounds 1, 3, 5, 6, and 9 against *Phomopsis viticola* (P.v.) using a 96-well microdilution broth assay.

Materials and Methods

The aerial parts of *Z. coccineum* L. were collected from the eastern desert in Egypt in May 2008 and identified by Dr. M. Elgebaly, Prof. of Taxonomy, Faculty of Science, Cairo University. A voucher specimen has been deposited at the Herbarium of Faculty of Science, Beni Suf University.

Table 1 ¹H- and ¹³C-NMR data for zygophylloside S (1) in pyridine-*d*₅.

Position	δ _C	δ _H ^a	Position	δ _C	δ _H ^a
1	39.4	1.51, 1.02	22	37.8	1.40, 1.69
2	27.1	1.86, 1.95	23	28.0	1.14 s
3	89.0	3.15 dd (12.0, 4.0)	24	16.9	1.06 s
4	39.8	–	25	16.8	0.88 s
5	56.1	0.90	26	19.2	1.10 s
6	18.9	1.51, 1.31	27	178.3	–
7	37.4	1.98, 1.86	28	180.4	–
8	40.3	–	29	18.6	1.23 d (6.0)
9	47.4	2.67 dd (11.2, 5.0)	30	21.7	0.82 d (6.4)
10	37.3	–	1'	105.3	4.76 d (7.6)
11	23.6	1.90, 2.12	2'	84.2	4.06 t like (8.6)
12	129.3	6.01 s	3'	78.5	4.25 t like (8.6)
13	134.4	–	4'	71.9	4.20 t like (8.6)
14	57.1	–	5'	78.2	3.87 m
15	25.8	2.35, 2.61	6'	63.1	4.36, 4.52 dd (15.2, 3.6)
16	26.7	2.23, 2.24	1''	106.9	5.14 d (6.8)
17	49.0	–	2''	74.0	4.54 t like (8.0)
18	55.2	2.80 d (11.3)	3''	74.6	4.17
19	38.1	1.40	4''	69.5	4.30
20	39.7	0.80	5''	67.3	3.75 d (11.3), 4.36
21	30.9	1.30, 1.40			

Note: δ values are in ppm; J values (in Hz) are in parentheses. ^a Multiplicity is not clear for some signals due to overlapping

The dried, powdered aerial parts of *Z. coccineum* (2 kg) were extracted with 80% methanol (10 × 4 L) and evaporated under reduced pressure to give a residue (300 g). A part (150 g) was dissolved in water and sequentially fractionated with petroleum ether, chloroform, ethyl acetate, and *n*-butanol. The *n*-butanol extract (20 g) was chromatographed over a silica gel column (600 g, 8 × 60 cm) by using EtOAc/CHCl₃/MeOH/H₂O 15:8:4:1 (10 L) and 6:4:4:1 (6.5 L) to yield seven main fractions (A–G). Fraction D (300 mg) was chromatographed on a Biotage system [SP-1 (40 + M), C18 column, MeOH/H₂O 3:2 (2 L)] followed by silica gel CC [20 g, 1 × 35 cm, CHCl₃/MeOH/H₂O 4:1:0.1 (150 mL)] to afford 1 (9 mg).

Zygophylloside S (1): White powder; [α]_D²⁰: +0.050 (*c* 0.01, MeOH); IR (NaCl): ν_{max} = 3368 (OH), 1687, 1224 (CO) cm⁻¹; HR-ESI-MS (positive-ion mode): *m/z* = 803.4166; ¹H- and ¹³C-NMR spectroscopic data: see Table 1.

Determination of sugars of 1

Compound 1 (3 mg) was heated with 2 N HCl at 95 °C for 3 h. The mixture was then neutralized with NH₄OH and extracted with EtOAc (2 × 2 mL). The aqueous layer residue was dissolved in pyridine and 0.1 M cysteine methyl ester hydrochloride in pyridine was added. The reaction mixture was heated at 60 °C for 1 h. An equal volume of phenyl isothiocyanate in pyridine was added and heated at 60 °C for 1 h. The mixture was filtered and analyzed by reversed-phase HPLC [Waters Alliance 2695, equipped with photodiode array detector, and Luna C18 column (150 × 4.6 mm, 5 μm particle size; Phenomenex, Inc.)], using acetonitrile + 0.1% acetic acid (A) and water + 0.1% acetic acid (B) in a gradient mode: A/B 10/90 for 20 min and A/B 55/45 for the next 25 min, at a rate of 1 mL/min. The response was detected at 250 nm. The standard sugar derivatives were prepared and analyzed identically. L-Arabinose and D-glucose were identified by comparison of the reten-

tion times of their derivatives with those of authentic sugar samples [L-arabinose: 13.4 min (minor)/15.5 min (major); D-arabinose: 13.3 min (minor)/15.7 min (major); D-glucose: 12.3 min (minor)/15.0 min (major); L-glucose: 12.8 min (minor)/14.9 min (major)].

Antifungal assay

Isolated compounds were evaluated using a 96-well microbioassay system for antifungal activity against *Colletotrichum acutatum*, *C. fragariae*, *C. gloeosporioides*, *Botrytis cinerea*, *Phomopsis obscurans*, *P. viticola*, and *Fusarium oxysporum* [14]. The technical-grade commercial fungicide captan (98%, Chem Service, Inc.) was used as a standard.

Mosquitocidal assay

Isolated compounds were subjected to a high-throughput larval bioassay with *Aedes aegypti* and evaluated for adult toxicity against *A. aegypti* and *Culex quinquefasciatus* [15, 16]. Permethrin (55% *cis* and 45% *trans*; Chem Service, Inc.) was used as a standard.

Supporting information

Detailed protocols for biological assays, general experimental procedures, thorough extraction/isolation procedures, and NMR spectra for compound **1** are available as Supporting Information.

Acknowledgements

▼ We thank the Egyptian government for a fellowship through the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. This study was also supported by a grant from the Deployed War-Fighter Protection Research Program (DWFP), the U.S. Department of Defense through the Armed Forces Pest Management Board (AFPMB), and the USDA ARS NPURU.

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received July 27, 2010

revised September 27, 2010

accepted September 30, 2010

Bibliography

DOI <http://dx.doi.org/10.1055/s-0030-1250463>

Published online October 26, 2010

Planta Med

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Correspondence

Ikhlas A. Khan, PhD

Research Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences and Department of Pharmacognosy, School of Pharmacy National Center for Natural Products Research, The University of Mississippi
University, MS 38677
USA

Phone: + 166 29 15 78 21

Fax: + 166 29 15 70 62

ikhlan@olemiss.edu