

V. I. Grishkovets, T. V. Sergienko,
and V. Ya. Chirva

UDC 547.914.4

The species small-fruited strawberry tree, Arbutus andrachne L., has scarcely been studied chemotaxonomically [1]. We have investigated the triterpenoid composition of the fruit of this plant growing in the Crimea.

To isolate the total triterpenoids, evaporated ethanolic extracts were diluted with water until they precipitated completely (yield 2.5% on the weight of the dry fruit).

Treatment of the deposit with petroleum ether permitted the separation of the triterpene alcohols and sterols (25%) from the triterpene acids (75%), which are practically insoluble in petroleum ether and remained in the precipitate.

The triterpene alcohols and sterols were separated by column chromatography on silica gel in the hexane-ether (7:3) system. In this way, substances (I) and (II) were isolated.

Substance (II), with mp 135-136°C (ethanol) coincided chromatographically with β -sitosterol. The acetate of compound (II), after recrystallization from ethanol, had mp 120°C. The IR spectrum of the sample of β -sitosterol isolated and that of an authentic sample proved to be identical.

Chromatography of the acetylated substance (I) on silica gel impregnated with silver nitrate in the hexane-benzene (2:1) system showed that it was not an individual compound but consisted of a mixture of approximately equal amounts of β -amyrin and lupeol and a very small amount of α -amyrin. The acetates of β -amyrin and lupeol were separated by column chromatography on silica gel/AgNO₃ (4%) with elution by the hexane-benzene (4:1) system. The β -amyrin isolated was identified from its chromatographic mobility in layers of silica gel/AgNO₃ in the hexane-benzene (2:1) system and from its IR spectrum.

Its chromatographic mobility in silica gel/AgNO₃ layers and the indices of the IR spectrum of the lupeol acetate isolated and those of an authentic sample coincided. It was identified additionally from its UV spectrum in concentrated sulfuric acid: λ_{\max} 310-311 nm, λ_{\min} 250 nm ($\epsilon_{\max} \cdot 10^{-2}$ 110). The results obtained and the form of the spectrum correspond to literature information [2].

LITERATURE CITED

1. R. Hegnauer, *Chemotaxonomie der Pflanzen*, Birkhäuser Verlag, Basel, Vol. IV (1966), p. 82.
2. A. Sosa, *Bull. Soc. Chim. Biol.*, 45, 117 (1963).

M. V. Frunze Simferopol' State University. Translated from *Khimiya Prirodnikh Soedinenii*, No. 6, pp. 866-867, November-December, 1979. Original article submitted June 28, 1979.