## Diels-Alder Reaction of 2-Ethenyl-1,3,3-trimethylcyclohexene with 4H-Chromen-4-ones: A Convergent Approach to ABCD Tetracyclic Core of Marine Diterpenoids Related to Puupehenone and Kampanols

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A rapid assembly of the tetracyclic core of marine diterpenoids related to puupehenone and kampanols by *Diels–Alder* reaction of 2-ethenyl-1,3,3-trimethylcyclohexene with 4*H*-chromen-4-one (=4*H*-1-benzopyran-4-one) dienophiles is described.

**Introduction.** – The *Diels–Alder* reactions of 2-ethenyl-1,3,3-trimethylcyclohexene with dienophiles like dimethyl acetylenedicarboxylate [1], unsymmetrical 1,4-benzoquinones [2], 1,4-benzoquinone [3], substituted 1,4-benzoquinones [4], 2-(methoxycarbonyl)-4,4-dimethylcyclohex-2-enone [5], 3-[(E)-(methoxycarbonyl)prop-2-enoyl)-1,3-oxazolidin-2-one [6], acetylenedicarbaldehyde [7], (S)-5-(*tert*-Butyl)-3-hydroxy-2-isopropyl-1,4-benzoquinone [8], and conjugated ketones [9] have beenreported. There are very few reports on [4+2] cycloaddition reactions using <math>4Hchromen-4-ones (=4H-1-benzopyran-4-ones) as dienophiles, and in all these cases an activating functionality like –CHO, –COR, –COOR, –CN, –Ar, *etc.* at C(3) have been utilized [10]. Only one *Diels–Alder* reaction of 2-ethenyl-1,3,3-trimethylcyclohexene with 6-bromo-3-cyano-4H-chromen-4-one has been reported [10a].

(+)-Puupehenone (1) [11a-11f], (+)-puupehedione (2) [11d], (-)-15-oxopuupehenol (3) [11e], (+)-15-cyanopuupehenone (4) [11d][11e], (-)-8-epichromazonarol (5) [12], (-)-15-cyanopuupehenol (6) [11e][13], chloropuupehenone (7) [11a], and cyclospongiaquinone-1 (8) [14] (Fig. 1) are an important group of biologically active marine terpenoids [15]. They are based on a mixed biogenetic origin involving a sesquiterpene unit with a quinol or quinone, and consist of a multiplicity of prenyl units uncommon in terrestrial organisms. They were isolated from sponges and possess a wide range of potent biological properties such as cytotoxic [11d][11e], antiviral [11d] [11e], antimicrobial [11a], antifungal [11d], immunomodulatory [11d] [11e], antitumor [11c][11h], antimalarial [11e], antibiotic [11i], antituberculosis [11j], antioxidant [11k], and insecticidal activities [11g]. The characteristic structural features, namely, a tetracyclic framework, four quaternary Me groups, a benzopyran ring, a trimethylcyclohexane moiety, four stereogenic centers at AB and BC ring junctions with trans- and cis-configuration, respectively, and an additional stereogenic center, i.e., C(15) of ring C. These tetracyclic diterpenes and their biological activities attracted interest of chemists to develop strategies for their synthesis. Kampanols A-C (9-11, resp.; Fig. 1) are polycyclic natural products having structural features similar to

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that of puupehenone. They were isolated from the fungal culture broth of *Stachybotrys kampalensis*, and they are novel and specific inhibitors of farnesyl-protein transferase [16].



Fig. 1. Puupehenone group of marine diterpenoids 1-8 and kampanols 9-11

Our interest in the synthesis of natural products [17] and absence of reports on *Diels–Alder* reaction of 2-ethenyl-1,3,3-trimethylcyclohexene with 4*H*-chromen-4-ones without an activating group at C(2)=C(3) led us to explore the synthetic potential

of 4*H*-chromen-4-ones such as 6,7-dimethoxy-2-methyl-4*H*-chromen-4-one (**12**) [18], 6-methoxy-2-methyl-4*H*-chromen-4-one (**13**) [19], 2-methyl-6,7-(methylenedioxy)-4*H*-chromen-4-one (**14**) [20], 2-methyl-6-nitro-4*H*-chromen-4-one (**15**) [21], 2-methyl-4*H*-chromen-4-one (**16**) [22], flavone (**17**) [23], and 4*H*-chromen-4-one (**18**) [24] as dienophiles in [4+2] cycloaddition reactions. We envisaged that, when the diene 2ethenyl-1,3,3-trimethylcyclohexene (**19**) [1b] could be used, then such a cycloaddition would lead to a convergent approach for the construction of the tetracyclic core of puupehenone and kampanol analogues.

**Results and Discussion.** – Here are the results (*Scheme*). The reaction of **12** with **19** proceeded at  $120^{\circ}$  in a sealed tube for 40 h to give the cycloadduct **20** in a moderate yield. The reaction was found to be regioselective as indicated by <sup>1</sup>H-NMR data, which exhibited a *singlet* at  $\delta(H)$  2.71 for H–C(12a) whereas the H–C(6a) signal was absent. The signals of the diastereotopic H-atoms at C(1) appeared at  $\delta(H)$  2.18 and 1.65. These data indicate the formation of the regioisomer **20**<sup>1</sup>) (*Fig. 2*).

Scheme. Synthesis of Tetracyclic Compounds 20-26



The reaction was also stereoselective as indicated by a *singlet* for Me–C(6a) at  $\delta$ (H) 1.39 and at  $\delta$ (H) 1.21 for Me–C(12b). The corresponding C-signals appeared at  $\delta$ (C) 34.2 (*Me*–C(6a)) and  $\delta$ (C) 23.8 (*Me*–C(12b)).

These high  $\delta$  values suggest the formation of the *endo*-configured product (*Fig. 2*). Recently, *Wallace* and co-workers [25] reported the synthesis of the (±)-*exo*-1,2, 3,4,6,6a,12a,12b-octahydro-9,10-dimethoxy-4,4,6a,12b-tetramethylbenzo[*a*]xanthen-12-one, which exhibited lower  $\delta$  values in the <sup>1</sup>H-NMR spectrum for the H-atoms at C(12a), and of Me–C(6a) and Me–C(12b). Furthermore this compound has a melting point of 165°, whereas **20** melts at 102°. Moreover, (±)-*exo*-1,2,3,4,6,6a,12a,12b-octahydro-4,4,6a,12b-tetramethylbenzo[*a*]xanthen-12-one is an oil [25], but our **24** is a solid with a melting point of 60°. The corresponding spectrum of **24** also displayed higher  $\delta$  values for H–C(12a), and Me–C(6a) and Me–C(12b). All these evidences suggest the formation of the *endo*-product. This represents the first example of a highly stereoselective [4+2] cycloaddition reaction involving easily available 4*H*-chromen-4-one dienophiles.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>) The ball-and-stick models were generated by using Materials Studio v4.4.0.0030, *Accelrys Software Inc.* 



Fig. 2. Regioisomers 20 and 20a, endo- and exo-conformations, and ball-and-stick models of 20

Similar results were obtained with the other 4*H*-chromen-4-ones 13-18 (*Table*). In all these cases, the formation of the tetracyclic core as in puupehenone (1) and related marine terpenoids and kampanols was observed. Further, the catalytic hydrogenation of the C(4a)=C(5) bond could lead to a *trans*-fused *AB* ring [3][4], which is present in these natural products.

| Entry | 4H-Chromen-4-one | $\mathbb{R}^1$ | $\mathbb{R}^2$       | $\mathbb{R}^3$ | Product | Temp [°] | Time [h] | Yield <sup>a</sup> ) [%] |
|-------|------------------|----------------|----------------------|----------------|---------|----------|----------|--------------------------|
| 1     | 12               | Me             | MeO                  | MeO            | 20      | 120      | 40       | 37                       |
| 2     | 13               | Me             | MeO                  | Н              | 21      | 120      | 40       | 37                       |
| 3     | 14               | Me             | -OCH <sub>2</sub> O- |                | 22      | 120      | 42       | 36                       |
| 4     | 15               | Me             | $NO_2$               | Н              | 23      | 120      | 40       | 32                       |
| 5     | 16               | Me             | Н                    | Н              | 24      | 110      | 34       | 35                       |
| 6     | 17               | Ph             | Н                    | Н              | 25      | 110      | 38       | 34                       |
| 7     | 18               | Н              | Н                    | Н              | 26      | 110      | 38       | 38                       |

Table. Reaction of 2-Ethenyl-1,3,3-trimethylcyclohexene (19) with 4H-Chromen-4-ones 12-18.

In conclusion, we have accomplished the first highly stereoselective [4+2] cycloaddition reaction using 4*H*-chromen-4-ones as dienophiles and thereby demonstrated the potential of this reaction in constructing the tetracyclic core of the marine

diterpenoids related to puupehenone analogues 1-8 and kampanols 9-11 in a convergent manner.

## **Experimental Part**

General. The b.p. of petroleum ether (PE) used was in the range of  $60-80^{\circ}$ . Column chromatography (CC): silica gel (SiO<sub>2</sub>, 60-120 mesh; *S.D. Fine Chemicals Ltd.*). M.p.: *EXPO HI-TECH* Melting-point apparatus; uncorrected. UV Spectra: *Shimadzu* UV/VIS Spectrophotometer *UV-2401PC* using MeOH as solvent,  $\lambda_{max}$  in nm ( $\varepsilon$ ). IR Spectra: *Perkin-Elmer Spectrum One* FT-IR Spectrophotometer in KBr. <sup>1</sup>H- and <sup>13</sup>C-NMR spectra: *Bruker AVANCE* (<sup>1</sup>H: 300; <sup>13</sup>C: 75 MHz) spectrometer in CDCl<sub>3</sub> and with TMS as an internal standard,  $\delta$  in ppm and coupling constants *J* in Hz. EI-MS: *3200 Q TRAP* LC-MS-MS System *MDS SCI EX SHIMADZU PROMINANCE LC* and *Varian 500-MS* (*Model 210*) LC-MS IT Mass spectrometer (at 70 eV, *m/z* (rel-%)). Elemental analyses: *Euro-Vector EA 3000* elemental analyzer.

General Procedure (GP) for Preparation of 20-26. A mixture of 2-ethenyl-1,3,3-trimethylcyclohexene (19; 900 mg, 6 mmol) and 12-18 (0.6 mmol) in a sealed glass tube was heated in an oil bath (*Table*). The thus obtained light brown semisolid product was purified by CC to yield 20-26.

rel-(6aR, 12aS, 12bR)-1,2,3,4,6,6a, 12a, 12b-Octahydro-9,10-dimethoxy-4,4,6a, 12b-tetramethyl-12H-benzo[a]xanthen-12-one (**20**). CC (PE/CHCl<sub>3</sub> 3 : 7) gave **20** (49 mg, 37%). Colorless solid. M.p. 102°. UV/ VIS: 339 (2822), 275 (4235), 236 (5757), 211 (5486). IR: 2924, 1678 (C=O), 1474, 1266, 1063. <sup>1</sup>H-NMR (CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 7.14 (*s*, H–C(11)); 7.01 (*s*, H–C(8)); 5.58 (*t*, J = 3.9, H–C(5)); 3.90 (*s*, MeO); 3.86 (*s*, MeO); 2.71 (*s*, H–C(12a)); 2.61 (*dd*, J = 9.0, 18.0, H–C(6)); 2.13 – 1.65 (*m*, CH<sub>2</sub>(1)); 1.72 – 1.61 (*m*, CH<sub>2</sub>(2)); 1.43 – 1.18 (*m*, CH<sub>2</sub>(3)); 1.39 (*s*, Me–C(6a)); 1.21 (*s*, Me–C(12b)); 1.13 (*s*, Me<sub>eq</sub>–C(4)); 1.11 (*s*, Me<sub>ax</sub>–C(4)). <sup>13</sup>C-NMR (CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 199.5 (C=O); 155.2 (C(9)); 154.4 (C(7a)); 154.2 (C(10)); 140.8 (C(4a)); 137.3 (C(11a)); 132.1 (C(11)); 130.5 (C(8)); 121.2 (C(5)); 78.6 (C(6a)); 64.2 (C(12a)); 56.6 (MeO); 56.2 (MeO); 37.5 (C(1)); 37.1 (C(12b)); 34.2 (Me(6a)); 33.5 (Me<sub>eq</sub>(4)); 32.6 (C(4)); 32.0 (C(6)); 23.8 (Me(12b)); 22.7 (Me<sub>ax</sub>(4)); 20.6 (C(3)); 17.5 (C(2)). MS: 370 (11, *M*<sup>+</sup>). Anal. calc. for C<sub>22</sub>H<sub>30</sub>O<sub>4</sub>: C 74.59, H 8.10; found: C 74.83, H 8.03.

rel-(6aR,12aS,12bR)-1,2,3,4,6,6a,12a,12b-Octahydro-10-methoxy-4,4,6a,12b-tetramethyl-12H-benzo[a]xanthen-12-one (**21**). CC (CHCl<sub>3</sub>) gave **21** (42 mg, 37%). Colorless solid. M.p. 111°. UV/VIS: 321 (3856), 229 (11487). IR: 3061, 2924, 1676 (C=O), 1483, 1239, 1028. <sup>1</sup>H-NMR (CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 7.19 (*s*, H–C(11)); 7.09 (*d*, J = 8.9, H–C(9)); 6.99 (*d*, J = 8.9, H–C(8)); 5.59 (*t*, J = 3.8, H–C(5)); 3.88 (*s*, MeO); 2.80 (*s*, H–C(12a)); 2.59 (*dd*, J = 9.0, 18.1, H–C(6)); 2.51 (*dd*, J = 9.0, 18.1, H–C(6)); 2.16–1.64 (*m*, CH<sub>2</sub>(1)); 1.71–1.60 (*m*, CH<sub>2</sub>(2)); 1.42–1.19 (*m*, CH<sub>2</sub>(3)); 1.38 (*s*, Me–C(6a)); 1.22 (*s*, Me–C(12b)); 1.14 (*s*, Me<sub>eq</sub>–C(4)); 1.12 (*s*, Me<sub>ax</sub>–C(4)). <sup>13</sup>C-NMR (CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 199.1 (C=O); 154.1 (C(7a)); 153.2 (C(10)); 141.2 (C(4a)); 137.5 (C(11a)); 131.7 (C(111)); 130.9 (C(9)); 126.2 (C(8)); 121.0 (C(5)); 78.3 (C(6a)); 64.1 (C(12a)); 55.9 (MeO); 37.2 (C(12b)); 36.9 (C(1)); 33.9 (Me(6a)); 32.8 (Me<sub>eq</sub>(4)); 32.2 (C(4)); 31.8 (C(6)); 23.2 (Me(12b)); 22.4 (Me<sub>ax</sub>(4)); 20.4 (C(3)); 18.0 (C(2)). MS: 340 (5,  $M^+$ ), 191 (100), 149 (17), 135 (18). Anal. calc. for C<sub>22</sub>H<sub>28</sub>O<sub>3</sub>: C 77.64, H 8.23; found: C 77.43, H 8.33.

*6-Methyl-8*H-[*1*,3]*dioxolo*[*4*,5-g]*chromen-8-one* (**14**). This compound was prepared by utilizing the general procedure reported for synthesis of chromone in [20]. CC (PE/CHCl<sub>3</sub> 5 :5) gave **14** (615 mg, 98%). Faint yellow crystals. M.p. 101 – 102°. UV/VIS: 347 (3881), 276 (3303), 238 (6472), 212 (5653). IR: 2922, 1632 (C=O), 1484, 1035, 922. <sup>1</sup>H-NMR (CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 7.27 (*s*, 1 H); 7.05 (*s*, 1 H); 6.44 (*s*, 2 H); 5.98 (*s*, 1 H); 2.52 (*s*, 3 H). <sup>13</sup>C-NMR (CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 201.9 (C=O); 155.2; 154.9; 154.4; 140.4; 138.1; 132.3; 129.8; 128.4; 101.7; 26.4. MS: 204 (21,  $M^+$ ), 148 (54), 118 (83), 116 (100). Anal. calc. for C<sub>11</sub>H<sub>8</sub>O<sub>4</sub>: C 64.70, H 3.92; found: C 64.50, H 3.99.

rel-(6aR,13aS,13bR)-1,2,3,4,6,6a,13a,13b-Octahydro-4,4,6a,13b-tetramethyl-13H-benzo[a][1,3]dioxolo[4,5-i]xanthen-13-one (**22**). CC (PE/CHCl<sub>3</sub> 7:3) gave **22** (44 mg, 36%). Colorless solid. M.p. 98°. UV/ VIS: 347 (3945), 276 (3386), 239 (7085), 210 (6929). IR: 2924, 1680 (C=O), 1484, 1035, 923. <sup>1</sup>H-NMR (CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 7.10 (*s*, H–C(11)); 7.03 (*s*, H–C(8)); 5.97 (*s*, OCH<sub>2</sub>O); 5.60 (*t*, J = 3.9, H–C(5)); 2.69 (*s*, H–C(12a)); 2.64 (*dd*, J = 9.2, 18.2, H–C(6)); 2.55 (*dd*, J = 9.2, 18.2, H–C(6)); 2.19–1.67 (*m*, CH<sub>2</sub>(1)); 1.69–1.62 (*m*, CH<sub>2</sub>(2)); 1.42–1.18 (*m*, CH<sub>2</sub>(3)); 1.39 (*s*, Me–C(6a)); 1.20 (*s*, Me–C(12b)); 1.15 (*s*, Me–C(12b)); 1.20 (*s*, Me–C(12b)); 1.50 (*s*,

$$\begin{split} & \text{Me}_{\text{eq}}\text{-C(4)); 1.13} \ (s, \text{Me}_{\text{ax}}\text{-C(4)).} \ ^{13}\text{C-NMR} \ (\text{CDCl}_3): 199.4 \ (\text{C=O}); 154.8 \ (\text{C(9)}); 154.5 \ (\text{C(7a)}); 154.1 \ (\text{C(10)}); 140.5 \ (\text{C(4a)}); 137.5 \ (\text{C(11a)}); 132.5 \ (\text{C(11)}); 130.2 \ (\text{C(8)}); 121.4 \ (\text{C(5)}); 101.1 \ (\text{OCH}_2\text{O}); 78.7 \ (\text{C(6a)}); 63.8 \ (\text{C(12a)}); 37.5 \ (\text{C(12b)}); 37.2 \ (\text{C(1)}); 34.1 \ (\text{Me}(6a)); 32.9 \ (\text{Me}_{\text{eq}}(4)); 32.5 \ (\text{C(4)}); 32.2 \ (\text{C(6)}); 23.5 \ (\text{Me}(12b)); 22.8 \ (\text{Me}_{\text{ax}}(4)); 20.5 \ (\text{C(3)}); 17.8 \ (\text{C(2)}). \ \text{MS}: 354 \ (4, M^+), 352 \ (100), 236 \ (10), 220 \ (40), 205 \ (21). \ \text{Anal. calc. for } \text{C}_{22}\text{H}_{26}\text{O}_4: \text{C} \ 74.57, \text{H} \ 7.34; \ \text{found: C} \ 74.83, \text{H} \ 7.46. \end{split}$$

rel-(6aR,12aS,12bR)-1,2,3,4,6,6a,12a,12b-Octahydro-4,4,6a,12b-tetramethyl-10-nitro-12H-benzo[a]xanthen-12-one (**23**). CC (CHCl<sub>3</sub>) gave **23** (40 mg, 32%). Colorless solid. M.p. 171°. UV/VIS: 296 (4131), 239 (10304). IR: 3063, 2925, 1679 (C=O), 1531, 1467. <sup>1</sup>H-NMR (CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 9.03 (*s*, H–C(11)); 8.46 (*d*, J =9.2, H–C(9)); 7.54 (*d*, J = 9.2, H–C(8)); 5.55 (*t*, J = 3.9, H–C(5)); 2.78 (*s*, H–C(12a)); 2.62 (*dd*, J = 8.9, 18.0, H–C(6)); 2.54 (*dd*, J = 8.9, 18.0, H–C(6)); 2.20–1.68 (*m*, CH<sub>2</sub>(1)); 1.71–1.64 (*m*, CH<sub>2</sub>(2)); 1.42 – 1.19 (*m*, CH<sub>2</sub>(3)); 1.39 (*s*, Me–C(6a); 1.24 (*s*, Me–C(12b)); 1.16 (*s*, Me<sub>eq</sub>–C(4)); 1.13 (*s*, Me<sub>ax</sub>–C(4)). <sup>13</sup>C-NMR (CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 199.8 (C=O); 159.2 (C(10)); 154.8 (C(7a)); 148.5 (C(11)); 144.6 (C(9)); 140.4 (C(4a)); 138.1 (C(11a)); 127.8 (C(8)); 120.5 (C(5)); 78.5 (C(6a)); 64.1 (C(12a)); 37.5 (C(12b)); 37.1 (C(1)); 34.3 (Me(6a)); 33.7 (Me<sub>eq</sub>(4)); 32.7 (C(4)); 31.7 (C(6)); 23.1 (Me(12b)); 22.3 (Me<sub>ax</sub>(4)); 20.8 (C(3)); 17.7 (C(2)). MS: 355 (8,  $M^+$ ), 327 (23), 206 (100), 160 (31), 143 (10). Anal. calc. for C<sub>21</sub>H<sub>25</sub>NO<sub>4</sub>: C 70.98, H 7.04, N 3.94; found: C 70.72, H 6.92, N 4.06.

rel-(6aR,12aS,12bR)-1,2,3,4,6,6a,12a,12b-Octahydro-4,4,6a,12b-tetramethyl-12H-benzo[a]xanthen-12-one (**24**). CC (CHCl<sub>3</sub>) gave **24** (56 mg, 35%). Colorless solid. M.p. 60°. UV/VIS: 295 (2551), 222 (7003). IR: 1676 (C=O), 1478. <sup>1</sup>H-NMR (CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 7.04 (d, J = 8.5, H–C(11)); 6.97 (d, J = 8.5, H–C(8)); 6.93 (t, J = 8.6, H–C(9)); 6.90 (t, J = 8.5, H–C(10)); 5.58 (t, J = 3.7, H–C(5)); 2.75 (s, H–C(12a)); 2.60 (dd, J = 9.1, 18.1, H–C(6)); 2.52 (dd, J = 9.1, 18.1, H–C(6)); 2.19–1.66 (m, CH<sub>2</sub>(1)); 1.69–1.60 (m, CH<sub>2</sub>(2)); 1.44–1.17 (m, CH<sub>2</sub>(3)); 1.39 (s, Me–C(6a)); 1.23 (s, Me–C(12b)); 1.13 (s, Me<sub>eq</sub>–C(4)); 1.10 (s, Me<sub>ax</sub>–C(4)). <sup>13</sup>C-NMR (CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 199.2 (C=O); 155.1 (C(7a)); 140.1 (C(4a)); 137.7 (C(11a)); 128.2 (C(11b)); 126.5 (C(8)); 121.4 (C(9)); 121.2 (C(10)); 120.8 (C(5)); 78.2 (C(6a)); 64.5 (C(12a)); 37.2 (C(12b)); 37.4 (C(1)); 34.0 (Me(6a)); 33.4 (Me<sub>eq</sub>(4)); 32.4 (C(6)); 32.2 (C(4)); 23.5 (Me(12b)); 21.9 (Me<sub>ax</sub>(4)); 21.0 (C(3)); 17.4 (C(2)). MS: 310 (4, M<sup>+</sup>), 191 (100), 161 (96). Anal. calc. for C<sub>21</sub>H<sub>26</sub>O<sub>2</sub>: C 81.29, H 8.38; found: C 81.03, H 8.50.

rel-(6aR,12aS,12bR)-1,2,3,4,6,6a,12a,12b-Octahydro-4,4,12b-trimethyl-6a-phenyl-12H-benzo[a]xanthen-12-one (**25**). CC (CHCl<sub>3</sub>) gave **25** (45 mg, 34%). Colorless solid. M.p. 105 – 106°. UV/VIS: 294 (4845), 250 (4076), 20 (4965). IR: 3070, 2924, 1678 (C=O), 1495. <sup>1</sup>H-NMR (CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 6.83 – 7.10 (m, 9 arom. H); 5.73 (t, J = 3.8, H–C(5)); 2.91 (s, H–C(12a)); 2.63 (dd, J = 9.0, 18.1, H–C(6)); 2.56 (dd, J = 9.0, 18.1, H–C(6)); 2.20 – 1.66 (m, CH<sub>2</sub>(1)); 1.69 – 1.60 (m, CH<sub>2</sub>(2)); 1.40 – 1.19 (m, CH<sub>2</sub>(3)); 1.24 (s, Me–C(12b)); 1.16 (s, Me<sub>eq</sub>–C(4)); 1.14 (s, Me<sub>ax</sub>–C(4)). <sup>13</sup>C-NMR (CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 199.1 (C=O); 155.5 (C(7a)); 140.9 (C(4a)); 137.3 (C(11a)); 128.5 (C(11)); 126.4 (C(8)); 127.3; 122.8; 122.8; 121.7 (C(5)); 121.1 (C(9)); 120.8 (C(10)); 119.8; 119.8; 115.5; 80.4 (C(6a)); 66.5 (C(12a)); 37.5 (C(12b)); 37.2 (C(1)); 33.2 (Me<sub>eq</sub>(4)); 32.1 (C(4)); 31.2 (C(6)); 24.0 (Me(12b)); 22.4 (Me<sub>ax</sub>(4)); 20.9 (C(3)); 17.5 (C(2)). MS: 372 (s,  $M^+$ ); 344 (48), 223 (100), 121 (58), 77 (11). Anal. calc. for C<sub>26</sub>H<sub>28</sub>O<sub>2</sub>: C 83.87, H 7.52; found: C 84.13, H 7.64.

rel-(6aR,12aS,12bR)-1,2,3,4,6,6a,12a,12b-Octahydro-4,4,12b-trimethyl-12H-benzo[a]xanthen-12one (**26**). CC (CHCl<sub>3</sub>) gave **26** (45 mg, 38%). Colorless solid. M.p. 55°. UV/VIS: 296 (3267), 238 (4609), 219 (7800). IR: 3085, 2925, 1677 (C=O), 1474. <sup>1</sup>H-NMR (CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 7.03 (d, J = 5.0, H–C(11)); 6.99 (d, J = 5.0, H–C(8)); 6.92 (t, J = 5.2, H–C(9)); 6.89 (t, J = 5.1, H–C(10)); 5.56 (t, J = 3.9, H–C(5)); 3.43 (ddd, J = 5.2, 8.9, H–C(6a)); 2.79 (d, J = 4.8, H–C(12a)); 2.41 (ddd, J = 5.2, 8.9, H–C(6)); 2.20 (ddd, J = 5.2, 8.9, H–C(6)); 2.16–1.68 (m, CH<sub>2</sub>(1)); 1.71–1.63 (m, CH<sub>2</sub>(2)); 1.42–1.18 (m, CH<sub>2</sub>(3)); 1.22 (s, Me–C(12b)); 1.15 (s, Me<sub>eq</sub>–C(4)); 1.12 (s, Me<sub>ax</sub>–C(4)). <sup>13</sup>C-NMR (CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 199.4 (C=O); 155.2 (C(7a))); 140.2 (C(4a)); 137.2 (C(11a)); 128.3 (C(11)); 126.2 (C(8)); 121.5 (C(5)); 121.2 (C(9)); 120.9 (C(10)); 79.2 (C(6a)); 63.8 (C(12a)); 37.2 (C(12b)); 36.8 (C(1)); 33.8 (Me<sub>eq</sub>(4)); 32.7 (C(4)); 31.5 (C(6)); 23.9 (Me(12b)); 22.1 (Me<sub>ax</sub>(4)); 21.1 (C(3)); 17.2 (C(2)). MS: 296 (12,  $M^+$ ), 147 (100), 105 (12), 91 (58), 77 (72). Anal. calc. for C<sub>20</sub>H<sub>24</sub>O<sub>2</sub>: C 81.08, H 8.10; found: C 81.34, H 8.22.

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