by Zhao-Yuan Wu, Hong-Mei Li, Yuan-Dan Li, Hai-Zhou Li, and Rong-Tao Li*

The College of Life Science and Technology, Kunming University of Science and Technology, Kunming 650224, P. R. China (phone: +86-871-3856880; fax: +86-871-3801956; e-mail: rongtaolikm@yahoo.cn)

From the fruits of Pieris formosa, four new highly acylated 3,4-secograyanane diterpenoids, secorhodomollolides E-H (1-4, resp.), along with two known ones, secorhodomollolides C and D (5 and 6, resp.), were obtained. Their structures were established mainly by spectroscopic methods, including 1D- and 2D-NMR spectroscopy, and mass spectrometry.

Introduction. - Plants of the genus Pieris, evergreen shrubs or small trees, containing only seven species, mainly grow in East Asia, East of North America, and West Indies [1]. Although a small genus of the big family of Ericaceae, Pieris has attracted much attention due to its toxic constituents, grayanane diterpenoids. Since the first investigation by Eykman [2], ca. 40 grayanane diterpenoids have been isolated from the plants of genus Pieris.

Pieris formosa (WALL) D. DON, a well-known toxic plant, is distributed mainly in hilly and valley regions of South and Southwest China [3]. In folk practice, the juice of the fresh leaves of *P. formosa* can be used as insecticide or lotion for the treatment of ring worm and scabies [4]. Thirteen grayanane diterpenoids, pierisformosins A - D and pierisformosides A - I, were obtained from the flowers and leaves of *P. formosa* [5-9]. Recently, two new highly acylated 3,4-secograyanane diterpenoids (pierisoids A and B) [10] and a new grayanane diterpenoid (grayanotoxin XXII) [11] from the flowers of P. formosa were reported. Biological investigations showed that some of these diterpenoids displayed significant physiological properties, including potent acute toxicity in mammals [12][13], antifeedant, growth-inhibitory, and insecticidal activities [14][15].

Our previous phytochemical studies on the flowers of P. formosa led to the identification of pierisformotoxins A-D, along with 26 known compounds [16]. We now investigated the fruits of this plant, searching for further structurally unique diterpenoids. As a result, four new highly acylated 3,4-secograyanane diterpenoids, secondomollolides E-H (1-4, resp.), together with two known ones, secondomollolides C and D (5 and 6, resp.), were isolated from the fruits of *P. formosa*. Here, we describe the isolation and structure elucidation of compounds 1-6 (Fig. 1).

Results and Discussion. - A 75% aqueous acetone extract of the fruits of P. formosa was partitioned between AcOEt and H_2O (1:1). The AcOEt layer was subjected repeatedly to column chromatography on silica gel and Sephadex LH-20, and then

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Fig. 1. Structures of compounds 1-6

purified by semipreparative HPLC to afford four new 3,4-secograyanane diterpenoids 1-4, together with two known ones, secorhodomollolide C (5) and secorhodomollolide D (6).

Compound 1, $[\alpha]_D^{24} = -30$ (c = 0.17, CHCl₃), was isolated as a white amorphous powder. The HR-ESI-MS (negative-ion mode; m/z 637.2512 ($[M - H]^-$)), together with the NMR data, provided the molecular formula of 1 as C₃₁H₄₂O₁₄. The ¹H-NMR spectrum of 1 (*Table 1*) exhibited signals for a propanoyloxy group at δ (H) 1.25 (t, J =7.5, 3 H), 2.66 (dd, J = 16.9, 7.6, 1 H), and 2.55 (dd, J = 16.8, 7.7, 1 H), and four AcO groups at δ (H) 1.73, 2.14, 2.18, and 2.21 (s, each 3 H). In addition, three *singlets* for Me groups at δ (H) 1.56, 1.95 and 2.09, and signals of five O-bearing CH groups (δ (H) 5.43, 5.74, 5.75, 6.62, and 6.91) and two olefinic CH signals (δ (H) 5.13 and 5.67) were also observed. Besides C-atom resonances of four AcO and one propanoyloxy moieties, the ¹³C-NMR and DEPT spectra (*Table 2*) showed 20 C-atom signals, including those of three Me, three CH₂ (one olefinic), and eight CH groups (five O-bearing), as well as of six quaternary C-atoms (one COO, one olefinic, and three O-bearing), suggesting that compound **1** is probably a highly acylated diterpenoid.

The ¹³C-NMR data of compound **1** showed that signals due to an AcO unit was absent, and the resonances for C(13), C(14), C(16), and C(17) were shifted by $\Delta\delta(C) + 6.3, +2.2, -7.1$, and +4.7 ppm, respectively, as compared with those of compound **6** (*Table 2*). These data revealed that the AcO group at C(16) in **6** was replaced by a OH group in **1**, which was confirmed by the following 2D-NMR data. Signal at $\delta(H)$ 4.41, showing no correlation with any C-atoms in the HSQC spectrum, was assigned to an exchangeable OH H-atom. Further, in the HMBC spectrum of **1** (*Fig. 2*), correlations from $\delta(H)$ 4.41 to C(16) ($\delta(C)$ 81.1) and C(17) ($\delta(C)$ 23.7) implied a OH group at C(16), which resulted in the change of the chemical shifts of C(13), C(14), C(16), and C(17).

The relative configurations of the stereogenic centers of 1 were assigned to be the same as those of 6 based on the similarity of the chemical shifts in ¹H- and ¹³C-NMR



Fig. 2. Key HMBCs of compound 1

		Table 1. ¹ H-NMR Data e	of Compounds 1–6 in (L	$O_6)$ Pyridine ^a). δ in ppm, J	J in Hz.	
Position	1	2	3	4	5	9
1	$3.64 \ (dd, J = 12.6, 7.5)$	4.41 $(dd, J = 13.4, 7.0)$	3.71 (dd, J = 13.5, 7.6)	3.17-3.21 (m)	3.19 (overlapped)	3.71 (dd, J = 13.5, 8.0)
2α	3.11 (dd, J = 17.1, 13.5)	3.10 (dd, J = 16.4, 14.3)	3.10 (dd, J = 15.9, 13.5)	$3.08 \ (dd, J = 16.6, 13.4)$	3.07 (dd, J = 17.0, 13.0)	$3.09 \ (dd, J = 17.5, 13.5)$
2β	2.50 (overlapped)	2.35 (dd, J = 16.2, 7.1)	2.13 (overlapped)	$2.50 \ (dd, J = 16.9, 6.8)$	2.50 (dd, J = 17.0, 7.0)	2.10 (overlapped)
5-OH	7.33 (s)	7.13 (s)	7.24(s)	7.14(s)	7.02(s)	
9	5.74 (d, J = 9.6)	6.00 (d, J = 8.9)	5.65(d, J = 9.7)	5.59(d, J = 9.9)	5.56 (d, J = 9.8)	5.60 (d, J = 9.6)
7	6.62 (d, J = 9.5)	$(6.80 \ (d, J = 8.8))$	$(6.39 \ (d, J = 9.5))$	6.26 (d, J = 9.6)	$6.26 \ (d, J = 9.7)$	6.37 (d, J = 9.6)
9	3.20 (d, J=3.8)	2.44 (overlapped)	3.56 (d, J = 4.7)	3.26 - 3.28 (m)	3.21 (overlapped)	3.55(d, J = 5.0)
11	5.75 $(t, J = 4.3)$	$4.68 (\mathrm{br.}s)$	5.68 $(t, J=4.8)$	1.75 (overlapped)	1.94 (overlapped, H_a),	5.61 - 5.66 (m)
					1.66 (overlapped, H_{β})	
12	2.46 (overlapped, H_a),	2.34 (overlapped, H_a),	2.42 - 2.29 (m)	2.00 (overlapped, H_a),	2.02 (overlapped, H_a),	2.46 (dd,
	2.20 (overlapped, H_{β})	2.08 (overlapped, H_{β})		$1.48 - 1.54 \ (m, \mathrm{H}_{\beta})$	$1.50 - 1.56 \ (m, { m H}_{eta})$	$J = 13.6, 10.8, H_a$),
						$2.10-2.66 \ (m, H_{\beta})$
13	2.47 (br. s)	3.40 (d, J = 9.2)	3.61 (d, J = 10.5)	$3.57 ({\rm br.}s)$	3.52 (d, J = 10.2)	$3.59 \ (dd, J = 19.0, 8.5)$
14	6.91(s)	7.35(s)	(6.95 (s))	6.05(s)	6.08(s)	7.00(s)
15	5.43(s)	5.62(s)	5.34 (s)	5.28(s)	5.32 (s)	5.32(s)
HO-C(16)	4.41(s)					
17	1.56(s)	1.90(s)	1.70(s)	1.67(s)	1.69(s)	1.70(s)
18	5.67(s), 5.13(s)	5.61(s), 5.02(s)	5.66(s), 5.10(s)	5.59(s), 5.03(s)	5.59(s), 5.05(s)	5.65(s), 5.10(s)
19	1.95(s)	1.79(s)	1.98(s)	1.91(s)	1.91(s)	1.98(s)
20	2.09(s)	2.12(s)	2.09(s)	2.03(s)	2.01(s)	2.08(s)
AcO-C(6)	1.73(s)	1.72(s)	1.67 (s)	1.64(s)	1.68(s)	1.68(s)
AcO-C(7)	2.18(s)	2.13(s)	2.22 (s)	2.20(s)	2.20(s)	2.15(s)
AcO-C(11)	2.14(s)		2.14 (s)			2.16(s)
Propanoyl-	1.25 $(t, J=7.5)$,	1.27 (t, J=7.5),	2.28 (s)	2.29(s)	1.31 $(t, J=7.5)$,	1.32 $(t, J=7.2)$,
oxy-C(14)	$2.66 \ (dd, J = 16.9, 7.6),$	2.57 (dd, J = 15.9, 7.4),			2.78 (dd, J = 16.8, 7.5),	2.72 - 2.77 (m),
or AcO-C(14)	2.55 (dd, J = 16.8, 7.7)	2.44 (overlapped)			$2.41 \ (dd, J = 16.8, 7.5)$	$2.39 - 2.44 \ (m)$
AcO-C(15)	2.21(s)	2.20(s)	2.22 (s)	2.21(s)	2.22 (s)	2.22(s)
AcO-C(16)		2.03(s)	2.14 (s)	2.12(s)	2.13(s)	2.29 (s)
^a) The ¹ H-NMF	spectra of compounds	1. 3. 4. 5. and 6 were reco	orded at 500 MHz, and t	hat of 2 was recorded at	400 MHz.	

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C-Atom	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	43.3 (d)	42.8 (d)	42.9 (d)	40.9 (d)	41.0 (<i>d</i>)	42.8 (d)
2	30.7(t)	31.1(t)	30.7(t)	31.7(t)	31.7(t)	30.7(t)
3	173.9 (s)	174.9 (s)	174.0(s)	174.3 (s)	174.3(s)	174.1 (s)
4	147.7 (s)	148.5(s)	147.9 (s)	148.1(s)	148.2(s)	148.0(s)
5	76.4(s)	76.7(s)	76.4(s)	76.2(s)	76.2(s)	76.3 (s)
6	74.0(d)	74.1(d)	74.1(d)	74.3(d)	74.4(d)	74.0(d)
7	67.5(d)	66.7(d)	67.6(d)	68.4(d)	68.5(d)	67.6(d)
8	53.4(s)	53.1(s)	53.4(s)	52.9(s)	53.0(s)	53.4 (s)
9	58.9(d)	57.6 (d)	60.9(d)	57.6(d)	57.3 (d)	60.8(d)
10	88.1 (s)	89.3 (s)	88.3 (s)	89.1 (s)	89.2 (s)	88.3 (s)
11	68.4(d)	62.8(d)	68.6(d)	18.8(t)	18.9(t)	68.7(d)
12	31.4(t)	35.2(t)	30.6(t)	22.6(t)	22.7(t)	30.5(t)
13	47.8(d)	45.0(d)	41.6(d)	42.2(d)	42.5(d)	41.5 (d)
14	77.8(d)	78.1(d)	76.0(d)	77.0(d)	76.9(d)	75.6 (d)
15	90.7(d)	88.9(d)	92.3 (d)	91.7(d)	91.4(d)	92.2(d)
16	81.1 (s)	90.0 (s)	88.3 (s)	88.2 (s)	88.3 (s)	88.2 (s)
17	23.7(q)	22.8(q)	19.2(q)	18.7(q)	18.9(q)	19.0(q)
18	113.9 (t)	113.1 (<i>t</i>)	113.9 (t)	113.6 (t)	113.5 (t)	113.9 (t)
19	19.1(q)	18.8(q)	19.1(q)	18.7(q)	18.9(q)	19.3(q)
20	28.8(q)	27.4(q)	30.2(q)	29.9(q)	29.7(q)	30.2(q)
AcO-C(6)	19.9(q),	20.1(q),	19.9(q),	19.9(q),	19.9(q),	19.9(q),
	169.2 (s)	169.1 (s)	169.1 (s)	169.0(s)	169.1 (s)	169.1 (s)
AcO-C(7)	21.4(q),	21.7(q),	21.3(q),	21.6(q),	21.6(q),	21.6(q),
	170.2(s)	170.2(s)	170.7(s)	170.7(s)	170.7(s)	170.8(s)
AcO-C(11)	21.4(q),		21.6(q),			21.3(q),
	169.0 (s)		168.9(s)			168.9 (s)
AcO-C(14) or	9.1(q),	9.6(q),	21.9(q),	21.9(q),	9.2(q),	9.3(q),
Propanoyloxy–C(14)	28.4(t),	28.6(t),	171.2(s)	171.2(s)	28.3(t),	28.3(t),
	173.2 (s)	173.6 (s)			174.8(s)	174.8 (s)
<i>AcO</i> -C(15)	20.9(q),	21.1(q),	20.8(q),	20.8(q),	20.8(q),	20.8(q),
	171.5 (s)	171.1(s)	171.9 (s)	171.7 (s)	171.7(s)	171.9 (s)
AcO-C(16)		22.5(q),	22.9(q),	22.9(q),	22.9(q),	23.0 (q),
		169.9 (s)	170.3 (s)	170.2 (s)	170.3 (s)	170.4 (s)

Table 2. ¹³C-NMR Data of Compounds 1-6 in (D_5) Pyridine^a). δ in ppm.

^a) The ¹³C-NMR spectra of compounds **1**, **3**, **4**, **5**, and **6** were recorded at 125 MHz, and that of **2** was recorded at 100 MHz.

spectra, as well as ¹H-NMR multiplicities for both compounds. In the ROESY spectrum of **1**, cross-peaks between H–C(1) with H–C(6) and H–C(14); H–C(6) with Me(19); H–C(14) with H–C(11) and H–C(13); and H–C(13) with HO–C(16) confirmed that H–C(1), H–C(6), H–C(11), H–C(13), H–C(14), HO–C(16), and Me(19) are α -oriented. Meanwhile, ROESY correlations HO–C(5)/H–C(7), H–C(7)/Me(20), Me(20)/H–C(9), H–C(9)/H–C(15), and H–C(15)/Me(17) indicated that HO–C(5), H–C(7), H–C(9), H–C(15), Me(17), and Me(20) were β -configured. Thus, the structure of compound **1** was assigned and designated as secondomollolide E.

Compound **2**, $[\alpha]_D^{25} = -25.7$ (c = 0.11, CHCl₃), also obtained as white amorphous powder, had the same molecular formula (C₃₁H₄₂O₁₄) as compound **1**, based on HR-



Fig. 3. Key ROESY correlations of compound 1

ESI-MS (m/z 637.2495 ($[M - H]^-$)). The similarity of the NMR spectra of **2** to those of **1** indicated that **2** was an isomer of **1**, with **2** differing only by the position of one of the AcO groups. The upfield resonance of CH(11) (δ (H) 4.68 (br. *s*); δ (C) 62.8), coupled with the obvious downfield resonance of C(16) (δ (C) 90.0), suggested that the AcO group was at C(16) in **2**, rather than at C(11) as in **1**, and, accordingly, the OH group was at C(11). The very similar coupling patterns and ROESY data of **2** and **1** also indicated their identical configuration. Therefore, the structure of compound **2** was established as shown and named as seconhodomollolide F.

Compound **3**, a white amorphous powder, $[\alpha]_D^{23} = -20$ (c = 0.12, CHCl₃), had the molecular formula of $C_{32}H_{42}O_{15}$, deduced from HR-ESI-MS (negative-ion mode; m/z 665.2445 ($[M - H]^-$)). The ¹³C-NMR data of compound **3** were quite similar to those of **6** (*Table 2*), and the difference was that **3** contained six AcO groups and no *O*-propanoyl moiety. The 2D-NMR data of **3** revealed that, as compared to **6**, an AcO instead of a propanoyloxy group was located at C(14). On comparing the coupling constants and ROESY data with those of compounds **1** and **6**, the configuration of **3** was found to be identical to those of **1** and **6**. Consequently, the structure of **3** was established and named as secorhodomollolide G.

Compound 4, isolated as a white amorphous powder, $[\alpha]_{D}^{23} = +5.7$ (c = 0.12, CHCl₃), had the molecular formula $C_{30}H_{40}O_{13}$, based on its HR-ESI-MS (negative-ion mode; at m/z 607.2392 ($[M - H]^{-}$)). The ¹³C-NMR analysis of 4 (*Table 2*) revealed similarities between the structures of 4 and 5. The obvious difference was that the propanoyloxy group at C(14) in 5 was replaced by an AcO group in 4. This observation was confirmed by the correlation from H–C(14) (δ (H) 6.05) to the AcO CO group at (δ (C) 171.2) in the HMBC spectrum of 4. The ROESY spectrum demonstrated that compound 4 had the same configuration as those of compounds 1–3. Then, the structure of compound 4 was established and named as seconhodomollolide H.

Compound **5** (ESI-MS: m/z 621 ($[M - H]^-$)) was identified as secondomollolide C, which was previously isolated from the flower buds of *Rhododendron molle* [17]. The reported NMR assignments for C(1) (δ (C) 56.0) and C(9) (δ (C) 40.3) of **5** had to

be revised because of strong HMBCs from HO–C(5) (δ (H) 7.02 (s)), H_a–C(2) (δ (H) 3.07 (dd, J = 17.0, 13.0)), H_β–C(2) (δ (H) 2.50 (dd, J = 17.0, 7.0)), and Me(20) (δ (H) 2.01 (s)) to δ (C) 41.0, and from H–C(7) (δ (H) 6.26 (d, J = 9.7)), H–C(14) (δ (H) 6.08 (s)), H–C(15) (δ (H) 5.32 (s)) to δ (C) 57.3. The above correlations implied the assignments of δ (C) 41.0 to C(1) and of δ (C) 57.3 to C(9); therefore, the published assignments should be revised.

Compound 6 (ESI-MS: m/z 715 ($[M + Cl]^+$) was identified as secondomollolide D by comparison of the NMR data with those reported in the literature [17].

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Experimental Part

General. Column chromatography (CC): silica gel (SiO₂; 200–300 or 100–200 mesh, Qingdao Marine Chemical Factory, P. R. China) and Sephadex LH-20 (Amersham Biosciences AB, S-Uppsala). TLC: silical-gel GF-254 plates (Qingdao Marine Chemical Factory, P. R. China), visualization by spraying with 10% H₂SO₄/EtOH, followed by heating on a hot plate. Semiprep. HPLC: Agilent 1200 system with a Zorbax SB-C₁₈ column (5 μ m, 9.4 × 250 mm). Optical rotations: Jasco DIP-370 digital polarimeter. 1D- and 2D-NMR Spectra: Bruker-DRX-500 and -AM-400 spectrometers. ESI-MS and HR-ESI-MS Spectra: API Qstar Pulsar instrument.

Plant Material. The fruits of *P. formosa* were collected in Jindian, Kunming, Yunnan Province, P. R. China, in October 2009. The sample was identified by Dr. *Yong-Peng Ma*, Kunming Institute of Botany, Chinese Academy of Sciences, and a voucher specimen (KMUST 2009100801) has been deposited with the Laboratory of Phytochemistry, Biotechnology Research Center, Kunming University of Science and Technology.

Extraction and Isolation. The air-dried and powdered fruits of *P. formosa* (6 kg) were extracted with 75% aq. acetone $(3 \times 18 \ 1, 24 \ h \ each)$ at r.t. The filtrate was concentrated under reduced pressure to give a crude extract, which was then partitioned between H₂O and AcOEt (1:1; 3 × 41). The AcOEt extract (350 g) was chromatographed on *Sephadex LH-20* (MeOH/H₂O 3:7, 6:4, 9:1, 1:0) to afford *Frs. I – VI. Fr. I* (MeOH/H₂O 3:7; 45 g) was subjected to CC (SiO₂; CHCl₃/MeOH 20:0, 19:1, 9:1, 4:1, 0:20) to give five fractions, *Frs. A – E.* Mixed crystals were obtained from *Fr. B* (CHCl₃/MeOH 19:1; 9 g), and were further chromatographed on SiO₂ (CHCl₃/MeOH 180:1, 150:1, 100:1), to obtain compounds **5** (94 mg) and **6** (115 mg). The mother liquor of *Fr. B* was subjected to CC (SiO₂; petroleum ether (PE)/Me₂CO 9:1, 8:2, 7:3, 6:4) to afford four subfractions, *Subfrs. B1–B4. Subfr. B1* was then purified by semiprep. HPLC (45–55% MeOH/H₂O; 3 ml/min) to give compound **4** (3 mg). *Subfr. B2* was separated by CC (SiO₂; PE/Me₂CO 10:1), and then by semiprep. HPLC (40% MeOH/H₂O; 3 ml/min) to yield compounds **1** (11 mg) and **3** (6 mg). *Subfr. B3* was repeatedly recrystallized with MeOH to afford compound **2** (19 mg).

Secorhodomollolide E (=rel-(3aR,5R,6S,6aS,7R,9R,11aS,11bR)-5,6,7,11-Tetrakis(acetyloxy)dodecahydro-4,8-dihydroxy-8,11b-dimethyl-2-oxo-4-(prop-1-en-2-yl)-4H-6a,9-methanoheptaleno[1,2b]furan-12-yl Propanoate; **1**). White amorphous powder. $[\alpha]_D^{24} = -30$ (c = 0.17, CHCl₃). ¹H- and ¹³C-NMR: see Tables 1 and 2, resp. ESI-MS (neg.): 637 ($[M - H]^-$). HR-ESI-MS (neg.): 637.2512 ($[M - H]^-$, C₃₁H₄₁O₁₄; calc. 637.2496).

Secorhodomollolide F (= rel-(3aR,5R,6S,6aS,7R,9R,11aS,11bR)-5,6,7,8-Tetrakis(acetyloxy)dodecahydro-4,11-dihydroxy-8,11b-dimethyl-2-oxo-4-(prop-1-en-2-yl)-4H-6a,9-methanoheptaleno[1,2-b]furan-12-yl Propanoate; **2**). Colorless prisms (MeOH). M.p. 278–279°. [a] $_{25}^{25}$ = -26 (c = 0.11, CHCl₃). ¹H- and ¹³C-NMR: see *Tables 1* and 2, resp. ESI-MS (neg.): 637 ([M – H]⁻). HR-ESI-MS (neg.): 637.2495 ([M – H]⁻, C₃₁H₄₁O₁₄; calc. 637.2496). Secorhodomollolide G (= rel-(3aR,5R,6S,6aS,7R,9R,11aS,11bR)-Dodecahydro-4-hydroxy-8,11b-dimethyl-2-oxo-4-(prop-1-en-2-yl)-4H-6a,9-methanoheptaleno[1,2-b]furan-5,6,7,8,11,12-hexayl Hexaacetate; **3**). White amorphous powder. $[a]_{D}^{23} = -20$ (c = 0.12, CHCl₃). ¹H- and ¹³C-NMR: Tables 1 and 2, resp. ESI-MS (neg.): 665 ($[M - H]^{-}$). HR-ESI-MS (neg.): 665.2445 ($[M - H]^{-}$, C₃₂H₄₁O₁₅; calc. 665.2445).

Secorhodomollolide H (=rel-(3aR,5R,6S,6aS,7R,9R,11aS,11bR)-Dodecahydro-4,11-dihydroxy-8,11b-dimethyl-2-oxo-4-(prop-1-en-2-yl)-4H-6a,9-methanoheptaleno[1,2-b]furan-5,6,7,8,12-pentayl Pentaacetate; **4**). White amorphous powder. $[a]_{23}^{23} = +6$ (c = 0.12, CHCl₃). ¹H- and ¹³C-NMR: Tables 1 and 2, resp. ESI-MS (neg.): 607 ($[M - H]^-$). HR-ESI-MS (neg.): 607.2392 ($[M - H]^-$, $C_{30}H_{39}O_{13}^-$; calc. 607.2390).

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