

SHORT COMMUNICATION

ISOLATION OF OLEANOLIC ACID FROM
FAGONIA CRETICA

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Plant: *Fagonia cretica* L. (Zygophyllaceae).

Source: Burg El-Arab, Egypt.

Previous work: Isolation of the saponins, partial characterization of the sapogenins and identification of the sugars.¹

Compounds isolated: The saponin matter was extracted with *n*-butanol from an aqueous solution of the alcoholic extract of the defatted plant, followed by precipitation of the saponins as cholesterol complex, decomposing the latter with pyridine and precipitation with ether.¹ The sapogenins were obtained by acid hydrolysis (H₂SO₄) and then fractionated into fagonin, a new triterpene,¹ and aglycone B by column chromatography. The aglycone B, eluted by benzene-methanol, 99:1, appeared to be a mixture of two components. It was further purified by preparative TLC (benzene-chloroform (90:10)). A lower dark-brown zone could be detected (I₂ vapour) with another faint brown one overlapping it. The lower zone was scratched and extracted (CHCl₃-methanol) to give, after crystallization from the same solvent, oleanolic acid, C₃₀H₄₈O₃ (i.r., mass spectrum, TLC, m.p. of acetate).

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¹ Z. F. AHMED, A. M. RIZK, F. M. HAMMOUDA and M. M. ABDEL-GAWAD, *J. Pharm. Soc. U.A.R.*, in press (1969).