

## The Structures of Vulgarin and its Isomers —A Reinvestigation

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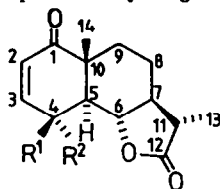
**Abstract**— The green parts of *Artemisia rehan*, Chiov (Asteraceae) were found to contain vulgarin. The <sup>1</sup>H and <sup>13</sup>C NMR spectra of vulgarin and 4-epivulgarin were unambiguously assigned based on COSY and <sup>1</sup>H-<sup>13</sup>C correlation experiments and an X-ray investigation settled the configuration. Furthermore, the compounds barrelin and judaicin were proved to be identical with vulgarin.

### Introduction

A compound was isolated from *Artemisia rehan*, Chiov<sup>1</sup> and it was believed to be identical with or closely related to vulgarin. Vulgarin (1) was first reported in 1961 as a constituent of some *Artemisia* species. Geissman and Ellestad<sup>2</sup> coined the name vulgarin after the source *Artemisia vulgaris* L., while Rybalko and Dolejš<sup>3</sup> investigated *Artemisia taurica* Willd. and isolated a compound which they assigned the same structure as that of vulgarin (1) but named it tauremisin. Those discrepancies were clarified already in the initial reports.<sup>2,3</sup> However, screening the literature today reveals confusing information. Thus, inconsistencies in the spectroscopic data have led to different names of the same compound. We initiated an investigation in order to clarify the situation.

### Results

The essential oil obtained by steam distillation of *Artemisia rehan*, which grows in Ethiopia, has recently been investigated.<sup>1</sup> In the present study the green parts of the plant were collected



- 1 R<sup>1</sup>=Me R<sup>2</sup>=OH  
2 R<sup>1</sup>=OH R<sup>2</sup>=Me



Figure 1.  $^1\text{H}$ - $^1\text{H}$  COSY-90 of vulgarin (1).

and extracted with chloroform to give white crystals, mp 178–178.5 °C.<sup>4</sup>  $^1\text{H}$  and  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR data of this compound and comparison with an authentic sample of vulgarin (1) showed that it was identical with vulgarin (1). The sample was investigated more thoroughly by two-dimensional NMR-techniques in order to assign the  $^1\text{H}$  and  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR spectra. The  $^1\text{H}$ - $^1\text{H}$  correlation was determined by a COSY-90 experiment<sup>5</sup> (see Figure 1). The assignment of the proton shifts is indicated in the one-dimensional spectrum shown along one axis. The assignments are straightforward except for the protons in the 8- and 9-positions. However, it can clearly be seen from the  $^1\text{H}$ - $^{13}\text{C}$  COSY<sup>6</sup> (see Figure 2) that the two protons at each position appear at separate shifts with one pair overlapping the other. Further, axial protons are generally more shielded than equatorial.<sup>7</sup> The  $^1\text{H}$  and  $^{13}\text{C}$  shift assignments, which are based on these two COSY experiments, are reported in Table 1.

A sample of 4-epivulgarin (2)<sup>8</sup> has also been investigated, and the results are shown in Table 1 and Figure 2. The  $^1\text{H}$ - $^{13}\text{C}$  shift correlation map shown in Figure 2 clearly shows the influence of 15-Me being in the  $\alpha$ - or  $\beta$ -position. Since the two diastereomers 1 and 2 were available, we investigated the configuration at C-4 by both steady state and transient nuclear Overhauser effect (NOE) measurements.<sup>9,10</sup> NOE's were observed between 14-Me, 15-Me and

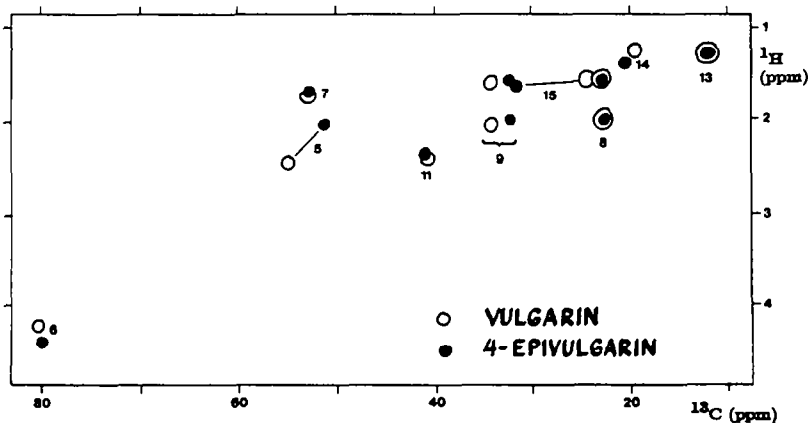


Figure 2. Map of the  $^1\text{H}$ - $^{13}\text{C}$  COSY data of vulgarin (1) and 4-epivulgarin (2).

H-6 in vulgarin and only between 14-Me and H-6 in 4-epivulgarin (see Figure 3). These results confirm that the 15-Me group is situated  $\beta$  in vulgarin and  $\alpha$  in 4-epivulgarin.

Due to some discrepancies in the literature concerning the spectroscopic data, vulgarin seems to have appeared under a series of different names. Thus, samples of vulgarin (*A. rehan*, Chiov,<sup>1</sup> *A. canariensis*, Lees<sup>11</sup>), barrelin (*A. barrelieri*, Besser),<sup>12</sup> judaicin (*A. judaica* L)<sup>13</sup> and tauremisin (*A. taurica*, Willd)<sup>5</sup> were investigated by <sup>1</sup>H NMR. The samples were shown to be identical when <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectra were run in the two complementary solvents chloroform-*d*<sub>1</sub> and benzene-*d*<sub>6</sub>.

Table 1. <sup>1</sup>H and <sup>13</sup>C NMR data (ppm) of the compounds 1 and 2 in chloroform-*d*. Multiplicities are given within parentheses and coupling constants in Hz.<sup>a</sup>

	<sup>1</sup> H NMR		<sup>13</sup> C NMR	
	1	2	1	2
1			201.6	203.1
2	5.91(d), <i>J</i> = 10.6	5.90(d), <i>J</i> = 10.1	125.7	125.3
3	6.62(d), <i>J</i> = 10.6	6.51(d), <i>J</i> = 10.1	151.6	150.2
4			70.1	68.2
5	2.45(d), <i>J</i> = 11.4	2.03(d), <i>J</i> = 11.0	54.6	51.0
6	4.18(dd), <i>J</i> = 11.6, 10.3	4.35(t), <i>J</i> = 10.5	79.6	79.2
7	1.70(m)	1.62-1.76(m)	52.4	52.3
8	<i>eq</i> ( $\alpha$ ) 2.0(m) <i>ax</i> ( $\beta$ ) 1.49(m)	<i>eq</i> ( $\alpha$ ) 1.98(m) <i>ax</i> ( $\beta$ ) 1.50-1.57(m)	22.7	22.8
9	<i>eq</i> ( $\beta$ ) 2.04(ddd), <i>J</i> = 12.3, 2.9 <i>ax</i> ( $\alpha$ ) 1.57(m)	<i>eq</i> ( $\beta$ ) 1.98(m) <i>ax</i> ( $\alpha$ ) 1.50-1.57(m)	34.2	32.5
10			46.2	45.9
11	2.37(dq), <i>J</i> = 12.5, 6.8	2.34(dq), <i>J</i> = 12.3, 6.6	40.6	40.8
12			178.2	179.0
13	1.27(d), <i>J</i> = 6.6	1.26(d), <i>J</i> = 6.59	12.5	12.5
14	1.23(s)	1.33(s)	19.8	20.6
15	1.57(s)	1.61(s)	23.8	31.7
OH	2.88(s)	1.67(s)		

<sup>a</sup>The assignments are based on <sup>1</sup>H-<sup>1</sup>H and <sup>1</sup>H-<sup>13</sup>C COSY experiments.

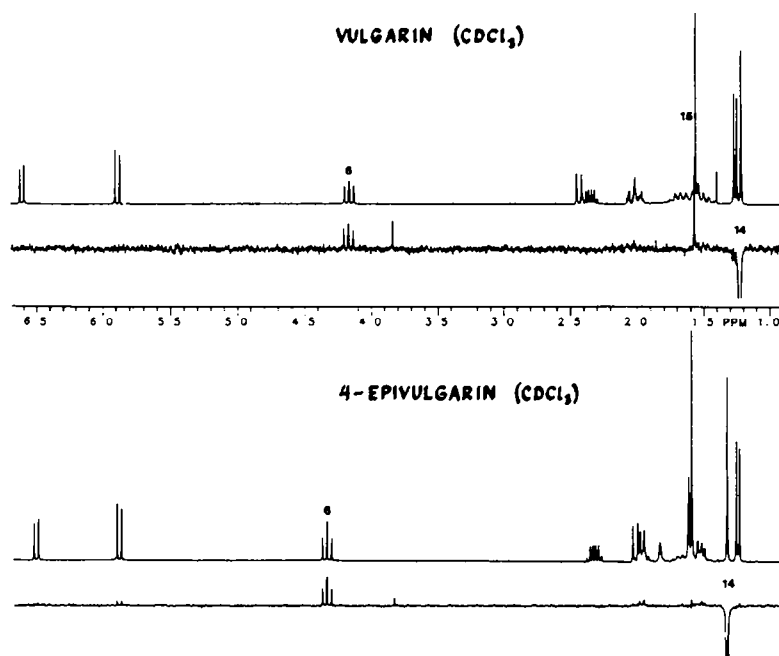


Figure 3. Transient NOE difference spectra (lower trace) of vulgarin and 4-epivulgarin.

A 320 ms selective 180° Gaussian pulse has been applied on the 14-Me protons followed by a composite 90° observe pulse after a delay of 700 ms.

An X-ray study was also carried out on a sample of vulgarin from *Artemisia canariensis* Lees. The structure† was solved by direct methods (MULTAN 11/82)<sup>14</sup> and refined by full-matrix least squares methods using the SHELX-76<sup>15</sup> program to a final R value of 0.066.

A summary of data collection parameters, atomic coordinates, temperature factors, bond distances, bond angles and selected torsion angles are given in Tables 2–7. The mean distances of the bonds (C–C: 1.517(32); C–O: 1.416(53); and C=O: 1.226(10) Å) are within the accepted values.

Ring A shows a flattened boat conformation, where C(1) to C(4) and C(10) define a pseudo-planar region (equation of the mean plane:  $0.2111x + 0.6640y - 0.7173z = -7.2527$ ; r.m.s.d.: 0.048) and C(5) is puckered 0.57(1) Å below it. On the other hand, ring B shows a regular chair conformation, whereas the  $\gamma$ -lactone ring adopts an envelope conformation.

The coordinates of the hydrogen atoms located in the difference Fourier synthesis confirm the expected relative positions deduced from the molecule conformation and agree with the reported configuration.<sup>16</sup>

The overall shape of the skeleton can be described by the torsion angles around the ring junction bonds, namely C(1)–C(10)–C(5)–C(6) (178.3°) and C(9)–C(10)–C(5)–C(4) (171.8°) for

† Calculated and observed structure factors are deposited with the Cambridge Crystallographic Data Centre, Lensfield Road, Cambridge CB2 1EW, U.K.

Table 2. Crystal data and summary of data collection.

$C_{15}H_{20}O_4$ , Mr=264	MoK $\alpha$ ( $\lambda = 0.71069$ Å)
Crystal dimensions: 0.20 x 0.20 x 0.30 mm	T = 298 K
Orthorhombic, P2 <sub>1</sub> 2 <sub>1</sub> 2 <sub>1</sub>	Scan width 1.0 + 0.35 tan $\theta$
Z = 4	Standard reflection (113)
a = 7.625(7) Å	Decay of standard 0.9 %
b = 9.017(4) Å	Reflections measured 2605 (2 $\theta$ range 2–50°)
c = 19.645(7) Å	Independent reflections 1389
v = 1350.7 Å <sup>3</sup>	Observed reflections 1067 with I > 2 $\sigma$ (I)
D <sub>x</sub> = 1.388 g cm <sup>-3</sup>	hkl range: -9 < h < 9, 0 < k < 10, 0 < l < 23
$\mu = 0.966$ cm <sup>-1</sup>	

Table 3. Fractional atomic coordinates with anisotropic thermal parameters ( $\times 10^4$ ) and their standard deviations for non-hydrogen atoms.

	X	Y	Z	B <sub>eq</sub>	U <sub>11</sub>	U <sub>22</sub>	U <sub>33</sub>	U <sub>23</sub>	U <sub>13</sub>	U <sub>12</sub>
C1	2545(8)	1131(8)	5953(3)	3.61	323(30)	560(36)	491(29)	175(28)	-26(26)	-57(29)
C2	2306(8)	2365(8)	6412(3)	4.24	250(31)	682(43)	681(35)	122(34)	-22(27)	3(32)
C3	3603(9)	2955(8)	6779(3)	3.98	369(33)	610(39)	533(31)	47(31)	20(26)	48(30)
C4	5461(7)	2338(7)	6796(3)	2.96	160(22)	526(31)	441(25)	-24(26)	32(21)	-34(25)
C5	5487(6)	781(6)	6507(3)	2.55	124(21)	466(29)	380(23)	35(22)	1(21)	-36(22)
C6	7257(7)	117(7)	6359(3)	2.84	229(26)	480(30)	370(25)	11(23)	-30(21)	-29(23)
C7	7175(7)	-1510(6)	6224(3)	2.81	222(26)	391(26)	455(26)	-25(25)	-8(22)	-48(23)
C8	6125(9)	-1839(8)	5590(3)	3.81	402(33)	586(39)	460(31)	-113(29)	-51(27)	-66(30)
C9	4321(8)	-1121(7)	5670(3)	3.60	315(27)	544(34)	508(30)	-50(29)	-75(26)	-97(27)
C10	4388(6)	530(7)	5840(3)	3.07	99(22)	643(38)	426(27)	21(27)	-73(21)	-113(25)
C11	9153(7)	-1933(7)	6281(3)	2.90	142(24)	452(30)	506(28)	19(24)	42(22)	-14(20)
C12	9670(7)	-915(7)	6837(3)	3.26	219(25)	492(31)	528(30)	6(27)	-76(24)	48(25)
C13	9582(11)	-3517(9)	6421(4)	4.43	390(37)	608(43)	687(42)	-11(37)	-98(35)	6(34)
C14	5019(8)	1412(8)	5210(3)	4.04	373(33)	793(49)	370(29)	74(32)	-54(24)	-83(31)
C15	6692(9)	3470(8)	6457(4)	3.78	328(33)	430(34)	681(39)	-23(32)	63(31)	-160(27)
O1	1301(5)	636(6)	5622(3)	4.28	245(19)	606(27)	775(28)	139(23)	-191(19)	-133(20)
O4	5882(6)	2288(5)	7499(2)	3.91	385(22)	633(27)	469(20)	-51(24)	-4(18)	-3(24)
O6	8534(5)	238(5)	6915(2)	3.04	212(18)	471(21)	471(21)	-50(18)	-99(16)	-27(16)
O12	10957(6)	-980(5)	7204(2)	4.60	381(24)	613(28)	716(27)	-56(23)	-211(21)	76(21)

the two cyclohexane rings, and C(5)–C(6)–C(7)–C(11) (–165.9°) and O(6)–C(6)–C(7)–C(8) (–171.2°) for the  $\gamma$ -lactone to ring B junction.

The shortest intermolecular contacts are C(10)...O(1)<sup>i</sup> = 3.273(8) Å (*i* = .5 + *x*, .5 – *y*, 1. – *z*), C(15)...O(12)<sup>ii</sup> = 3.222(8) Å and O(4)...O(12)<sup>iii</sup> = 2.930(8) Å (*ii* = 2. – *x*, .5 + *y*, 1.5 – *z*).

### Discussion

The NMR and X-ray data presented in this paper conclusively settle the configuration of vulgarin (1), which is in accordance with earlier reported results.<sup>2,3</sup> Thus, the 14- and 15-methyl groups are situated in  $\beta$ -positions while the 11-methyl group is situated in an  $\alpha$ -position.

Furthermore, barrelin, judaicin and tauremisin were shown to be identical with vulgarin since their <sup>1</sup>H nmr spectra in chloroform-*d* and benzene-*d*<sub>6</sub>, respectively, were superimposable. The compounds were isolated from different *Artemisia* species. Ohno *et al.*<sup>17</sup> reported the <sup>13</sup>C shift  $\delta$  22.7 for the 15-Me of vulgarin isolated from *A. ludoviciana*. Since all the other <sup>13</sup>C shifts are identical with those of vulgarin, the reported value is in error or the shifts represent another compound.

**Table 4.** Fractional atomic coordinates ( $\times 10^3$ ) with their standard deviations with the equivalent temperature factors for hydrogen atoms.

	X(a)	Y(b)	Z(c)	
H2	1240(107)	2796(79)	6344(32)	3.96
H3	3385(100)	3829(82)	7176(31)	3.96
H4	5913(116)	1717(84)	7593(42)	3.96
H5	4820(98)	381(79)	6860(35)	3.96
H6	7915(96)	545(77)	5948(34)	3.96
H7	3355(108)	3049(83)	8406(36)	3.96
H11	9780(103)	-1659(77)	5887(34)	3.96
H81	6052(97)	-2948(84)	5484(31)	3.96
H82	6621(107)	-1441(80)	5245(38)	3.96
H91	3718(103)	-1439(81)	5240(34)	3.96
H92	3892(107)	-1520(82)	6024(34)	3.96
H131	9203(101)	-3812(79)	6853(37)	3.79
H132	10617(114)	-3830(80)	6506(31)	3.79
H133	9326(102)	-4047(83)	6029(33)	3.79
H141	4788(93)	2704(77)	5222(32)	3.79
H142	4541(103)	1213(75)	4810(33)	3.79
H143	6518(104)	1046(76)	5110(32)	3.79
H151	6483(99)	4405(78)	6659(34)	3.79
H152	6470(100)	3574(81)	5977(33)	3.79
H153	7959(108)	3152(81)	6460(34)	3.79

**Table 5.** Non-hydrogen bond distances (in Å) with their standard deviations.

C1	-C10	1.523(8)
C5	-C10	1.572(7)
C9	-C10	1.526(9)
C14	-C10	1.548(8)
C2	-C1	1.444(10)
O1	-C1	1.233(7)
C3	-C2	1.334(10)
C4	-C3	1.523(8)
C5	-C4	1.514(8)
C15	-C4	1.539(8)
O4	-C4	1.418(7)
O6	-C5	1.505(7)
C7	-O6	1.492(8)
O6	-O6	1.468(6)
C8	-C7	1.511(8)
C11	-C7	1.560(7)
O9	-C8	1.529(9)
C12	-C11	1.480(9)
C13	-C11	1.490(10)
O6	-C12	1.362(7)
O12	-C12	1.219(7)

The 4-*epivulgarin* showed very similar  $^1\text{H}$  and  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR data compared with those of vulgarin except for the methyl group in the 15-position. The large downfield shift of the 15-methyl group in the  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR spectrum (*cf.* Table 1), when compared with vulgarin, is consistent with a methyl group in the  $\alpha$ -position. The NOE measurements (*cf.* Figure 3) unambiguously settle the  $\beta/\alpha$ -relationships of the 15-methyl group of vulgarin (1) and 4-*epivulgarin* (2), respectively.

The shift data presented in Table 1 are unequivocally assigned based on  $^1\text{H}$ - $^1\text{H}$  and  $^1\text{H}$ - $^{13}\text{C}$  COSY experiments. Thus, a few NMR assignments of 1 and 2 reported by Metwally *et al.*<sup>18</sup> must be corrected. The shifts for the protons H-8 $\beta$  and H-9 $\alpha$  of 1 have been revised and the shift of the 13-Me in 2 should be  $\delta$  1.26 and not  $\delta$  1.58. Furthermore, the C-11 shift of 2 is reported to be at  $\delta$  40.1 while it should be at  $\delta$  40.8.

### Experimental

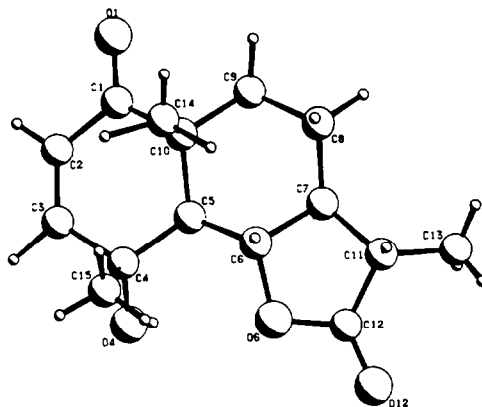
**NMR.** The NMR-spectra were measured on Bruker WP200 and Varian XL200 and XL300 spectrometers. Unless otherwise stated the  $^1\text{H}$  and  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR-spectra were recorded in deuteriochloroform with tetramethylsilane as an internal standard. COSY 90: 16 transients of 512 complex points each were measured for each of 512  $t_1$  increments. Spectral widths were 1200 Hz in both dimensions.  $^1\text{H}$ - $^{13}\text{C}$  COSY: The employed pulse sequence was reported elsewhere.<sup>6</sup> The delays  $\Delta_1$  and  $\Delta_2$  were set to 3.5 and 2 ms, respectively. 1024 transients of 1024 complex points each were measured for each of 64  $t_1$  increments. Spectral widths were 5630 Hz in the  $f_2$  and 1200 Hz in the  $f_1$  dimension. NOE: The samples for the NOE-measurements were treated several times by the freeze-pump-thaw cycle before vacuum-sealing the tubes. The NOE difference technique was used as described by Hall *et al.*,<sup>9</sup> and the spectra were recorded with the decoupler turned off during pulse and acquisition preceded by 5 s of irradiation.

**Table 6.** Non-hydrogen bond angles (in degrees) with their standard deviations.

C5	-C10	-C1	108.7(5)
C9	-C10	-C1	110.4(5)
C9	-C10	-C5	109.9(5)
C14	-C10	-C1	102.7(5)
C14	-C10	-C5	115.3(4)
C14	-C10	-O9	109.7(5)
C2	-C1	-C10	118.8(5)
O1	-C1	-C10	120.3(6)
O1	-C1	-C2	120.7(6)
C3	-C2	-C1	123.4(6)
C4	-C3	-C2	123.8(7)
C5	-C4	-C3	110.1(5)
C15	-C4	-C3	108.4(5)
C15	-C4	-C5	116.4(5)
O4	-C4	-C3	104.2(5)
O4	-C4	-C5	109.4(5)
O4	-C4	-C15	107.7(5)
C4	-C5	-C10	116.0(5)
O6	-C5	-C10	105.0(4)
O6	-C5	-C4	117.0(4)
C7	-O6	-C5	112.8(5)
O6	-O6	-C5	114.9(4)
O6	-O6	-C7	103.5(4)
C8	-C7	-O6	111.2(6)
C11	-C7	-O6	100.8(6)
C11	-C7	-C8	121.6(5)
C9	-C8	-C7	108.0(5)
C8	-C9	-C1	113.9(5)
C12	-C11	-C7	99.1(5)
C13	-C11	-C7	117.4(5)
C13	-C11	-C12	113.6(6)
O6	-C12	-C11	112.8(4)
O12	-C12	-C11	128.3(6)
O12	-C12	-O6	118.8(5)
C12	-O6	-O6	106.3(4)

**Table 7.** Selected torsion angles (in degrees).

C10	C1	C2	C3	-4.28	C3	C4	C5	C10	43.47
C1	C2	C3	C4	-4.41	O6	O6	C7	C11	-41.00
C2	C3	C4	C5	-15.37	O6	C7	C11	C12	36.23
C1	C10	C5	C4	-50.89	C7	C11	C12	O6	-20.01
C5	C10	O9	C8	-56.78	C7	O6	O6	C12	29.81
O9	C10	C5	O6	57.43	C11	C12	O6	O6	-5.23
C5	C10	C1	C2	30.06	C1	C10	C5	O6	178.30
C10	C5	O6	C7	-62.34	O9	C10	C5	C4	-171.76
C5	O6	C7	O6	63.88	O5	O6	C7	C11	-165.88
O6	C7	O6	O9	-54.98	O6	O6	C7	O6	-171.25
C7	O6	O9	C10	53.68					

**Figure 4.** Perspective view of vulgarin (1).

**X-ray.** Cell parameters and intensities were measured on an Enraf-Nonius CAD 4 diffractometer using a crystal of 0.20 x 0.20 x 0.30 mm. The unit cell was measured by centering automatically 25 high angle independent reflections and refining the orientation matrix and unit cell parameters by least-squares. The intensities were corrected for Lorentz and polarization but not for absorption. The last cycle of anisotropic refinement for non-hydrogen atoms with all independent observed reflections converged to the final  $R = 0.066$  and  $R_w = 0.069$  with  $R_w = [\sum w(\Delta F)^2 / \sum w F_0^2]^{1/2}$  where  $w = 2.1765/[\sigma^2(F_0) + 0.003566(F_0^2)]$ . The scattering factors were taken from International Tables for X-ray Crystallography.<sup>19</sup> The molecular structure as depicted in Figure 4 was obtained with the PLUTO drawing program.<sup>20</sup>

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