

STERESELECTIVE TOTAL SYNTHESSES OF (±)-18,19-DIHYDROHUNTERBURNINE,
(±)-10-O-METHYL-18,19-DIHYDROHUNTERBURNINE, (±)-10-HYDROXYCORYNANTHEIDOL
AND (±)-10-METHOXYCORYNANTHEIDOL

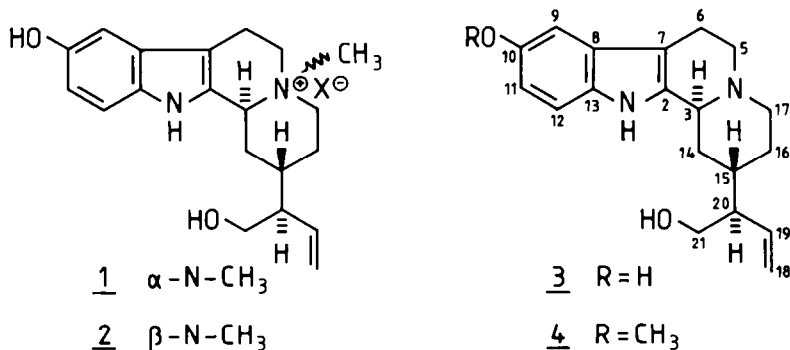
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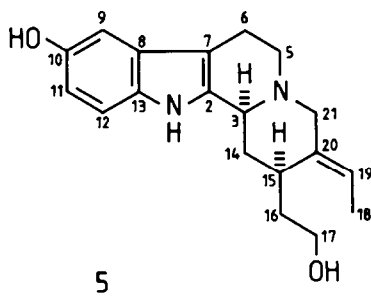
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Abstract - Short, stereoselective total syntheses for (±)-18,19-dihydrohunterburnine, (±)-10-O-methyl-18,19-dihydrohunterburnine, (±)-10-hydroxycorynantheidol and (±)-10-methoxycorynantheidol are described.

Hunterburnine metho-salts 1 and 2, the initial representatives of a small group of indole alkaloids possessing the C(3)H-C(15)H¹ trans relationship with the C(15)H β-configuration,² were first isolated about thirty years ago by Bartlett, Taylor and coll. from the bark of Hunteria eburnea Pichon (Apocynaceae).^{3,4} Since then, the presence of 1 and/or 2 has been indicated e.g. in Ochrosia sandwicensis⁵ and in Pleiocarpa mutica⁶. The corresponding, long-sought tertiary base hunterburnine 3 (called 10-hydroxyantirrhine), and its O-methyl derivative 10-O-methylhunterburnine 4 (called 10-methoxyantirrhine), were quite recently isolated from the New Hebridian species Ochrosia alyxioides Guillaumin (Apocynaceae).⁷

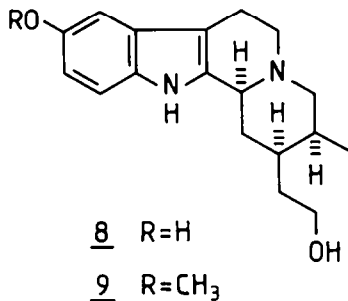
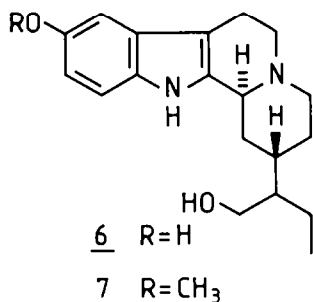


In connection with their work on *Hunteria eburnea*, Bartlett, Taylor and coll. also isolated a metho-salt of a third hydroxyindole alkaloid, which they called huntrabrine methochloride.⁴ The corresponding tertiary base huntrabrine (= 10-hydroxygeissoschizol) 5 was later found in several other apocynaceous species, e.g. *Amsonia elliptica*⁸, *Rauwolfia vomitoria*⁹ and *Ervatamia hainanensis*¹⁰.



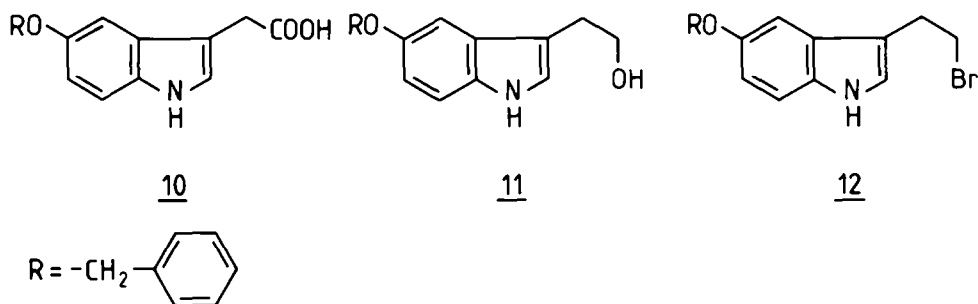
No direct total synthesis of hunterburnine 3, 18,19-dihydrohunterburnine 6 or the corresponding metho-salts has been presented, although attempts¹¹ at synthesis have been made. Nor has any direct total synthesis of huntrabrine 5 or its 19,20-dihydroderivatives (*vide infra*) been presented. There is, however, a report on the transformation of quinine into 18,19-dihydrohunterburnine 6 and its α -metho-salt.¹²

We recently developed a new synthetic method for indole alkaloids of the present type, which permits the C(3)H-C(15)H and/or C(3)H-C(20)H relationship(s) to be chosen at will.¹³⁻¹⁸ Our method seemed to be applicable for a short synthesis of (\pm)-18,19-dihydrohunterburnine 6, (\pm)-10-O-methyl-18,19-dihydrohunterburnine 7, (\pm)-10-hydroxycorynantheidol 8 (= one of the two possible 19,20-dihydrohuntrabrine; *vide supra*) and (\pm)-10-methoxycorynantheidol 9. The present paper describes our results, which represent the first total syntheses of these four compounds (6, 7, 8 and 9).

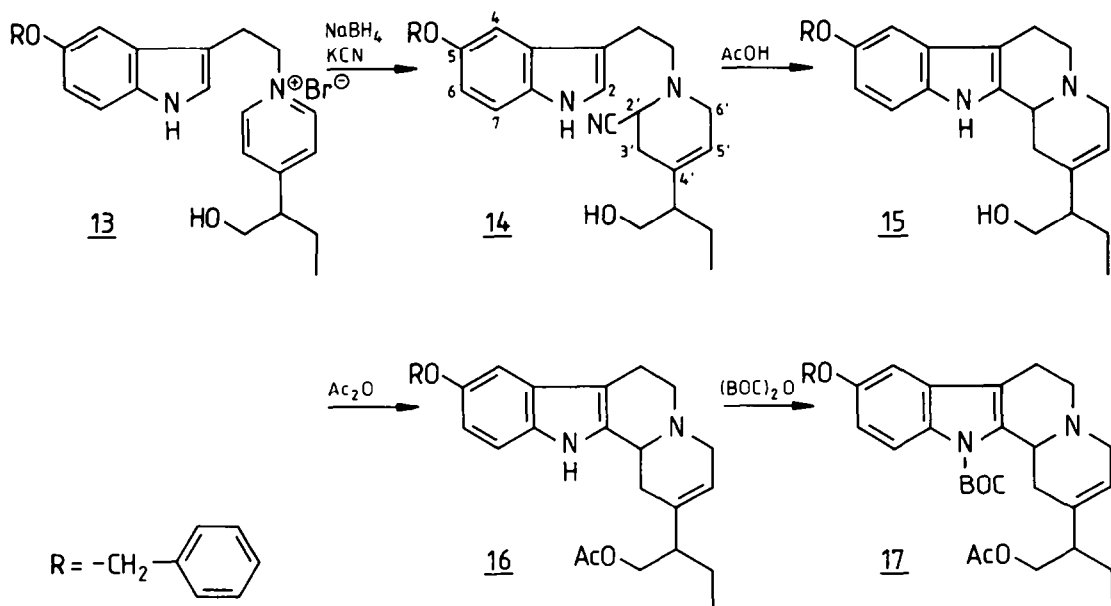


RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

LAH reduction of 5-benzyloxyindole-3-acetic acid¹⁹ **10** afforded 5-benzyloxytryptophol **11**, which was transformed by PBr₃ treatment to 5-benzyloxytryptophyl bromide **12**. Alkylation of 2-(4'-pyridyl)butanol²⁰ with 5-benzyloxytryptophyl bromide **12** yielded pyridinium salt **13**.

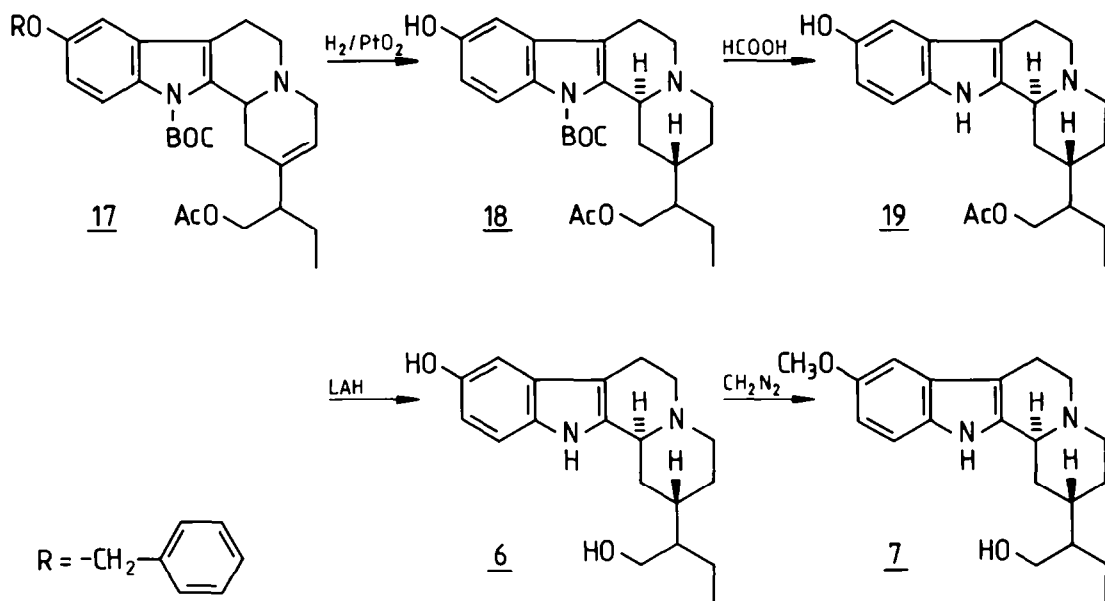


The pyridinium salt **13** was transformed by NaBH₄ reduction and cyanide trapping^{13-16,21,22} to α -aminonitrile **14**, which by AcOH treatment led to compound **15**. Compound **15** was acetylated to compound **16**, which was then transformed with di-*t*-butyl dicarbonate [(BOC)₂O] to the BOC-protected counterpart **17** (Scheme 1).



Scheme 1

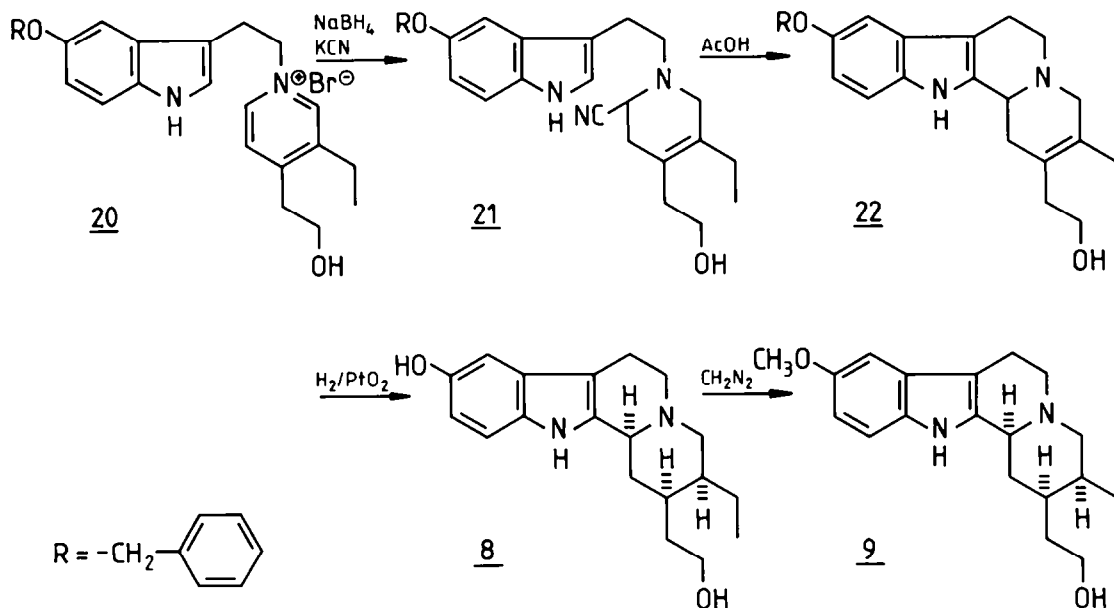
Catalytic hydrogenation (PtO_2) of the BOC-protected compound 17 led to compound 18 [C(3)H-C(15)H *trans*; [reduction of the C(15)-C(16) double bond and hydrogenolytic cleavage of the C(10) benzyloxy group]. Compound 18 yielded by acid induced cleavage (HCOOH) compound 19, which by LAH treatment afforded (\pm)-18,19-dihydrohinterburnine 6 in good yield. Treatment of the prepared (\pm)-18,19-dihydrohinterburnine 6 with CH_2N_2 led to (\pm)-10-O-methyl-18,19-dihydrohinterburnine 7, which is the dihydro derivative of the recently found⁷ 10-O-methylhinterburnine 4 (Scheme 2).



Scheme 2

Analogously to the above, alkylation of 3-ethyl-4-(2'-hydroxyethyl)pyridine²³ with 5-benzyloxytryptophyl bromide 12 led to the pyridinium salt 20, which was transformed by NaBH_4 reduction and cyanide trapping^{13-16,21,22} to α -aminonitrile 21. Treatment of the α -aminonitrile 21 with AcOH yielded compound 22. Catalytic hydrogenation (PtO_2) of compound 22 led directly to (\pm)-10-hydroxycorynantheidol 8 [C(3)H-C(15)H *cis*; C(3)H-C(20)H *cis*] [reduction of the C(15)-C(20) double bond and hydrogenolytic cleavage of the C(10) benzyloxy group]. Methylation of compound 8 with CH_2N_2 afforded (\pm)-10-methoxycorynantheidol 9, which is the racemic form of (-)-

10-methoxycorynantheidol prepared from (-)-10-methoxygeissoschizol by catalytic hydrogenation²³ (Scheme 3).



Scheme 3

¹³C NMR data of all the compounds formed are given in Fig. 1.

Comparison of the chemical shifts found for compounds **6**, **7**, **8**, **9**, **15**, **16**, **17**, **18**, **19** and **22** with those of earlier experiments,^{13,14} taking into account the conformational considerations, gives clear evidence of the stereostructures depicted in the formulae. The "double signals" found for several carbons in compounds **6**, **7**, **14**, **15**, **16**, **17**, **18** and **19** suggest that the samples consist of mixtures of C(20) epimers (See also the ¹H NMR spectrum of compound **16**).

CONCLUSIONS

The present results clearly demonstrate the applicability of our recently developed method¹³⁻¹⁷ to short syntheses of (±)-18,19-dihydrohunterburnine **6**, (±)-10-O-methyl-18,19-dihydrohunterburnine **7**, (±)-10-hydroxycorynantheidol (i.e. one of the two possible 19,20-dihydrohuntrabrine) **8** and (±)-10-

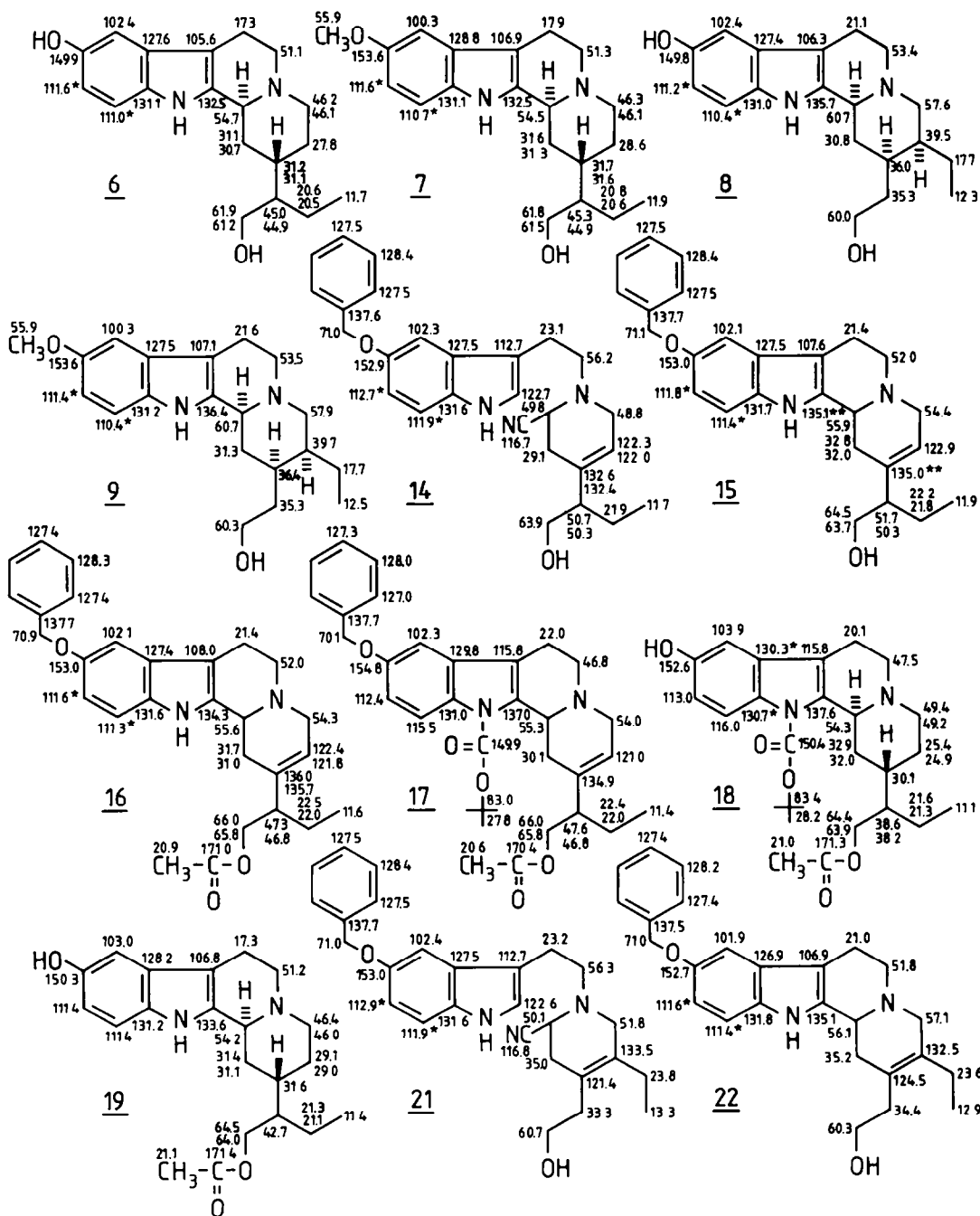


Fig. 1

Syntheses of hunterburnines and corynantheidols

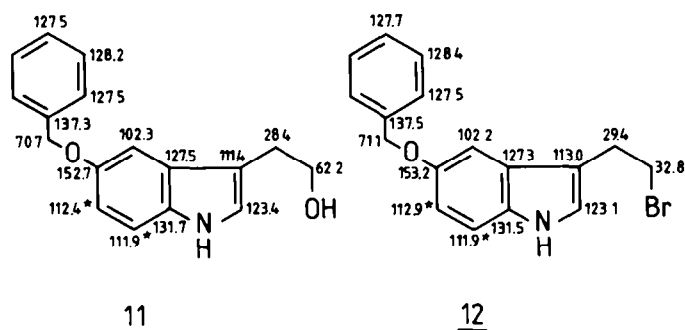


Fig. 1 (continued)

methoxycorynantheidol 9. The achievements described represent the first total syntheses of these four compounds.

EXPERIMENTAL

IR spectra were recorded with a Perkin-Elmer 700 spectrometer in CHCl_3 , if not otherwise stated. IR absorption bands are expressed in reciprocal centimetres (cm^{-1}) using polystyrene calibration. ^1H and ^{13}C NMR spectra were recorded in CDCl_3 (compounds 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 and 21), in $\text{CDCl}_3/\text{MeOH-d}_4$ (8/1) (compounds 7 and 9), in $\text{CDCl}_3/\text{MeOH-d}_4$ (5/1) (compounds 8 and 22) and in MeOH-d_4 (compound 6) on a Jeol JNM-FX 60 spectrometer working at 59.80 MHz (^1H NMR) and 15.04 MHz (^{13}C NMR). Chemical shift data are given in ppm downfield from TMS. Abbreviations s, d, t, q, m, br and def are used to designate singlet, doublet, triplet, quartet, multiplet, broad and deformed, respectively. For ^{13}C NMR data see Fig. 1. Mass spectrometry was done on a Jeol DX 303/DA 5000 instrument.

Preparation of compound 11

LAH reduction of commercial 5-benzyloxyindole-3-acetic acid¹⁹ (3.00 g, 10.66 mmol) in abs. THF (200 ml) for 3.5 h (rt, Ar-atm) afforded pure compound 11. Y. 2.64 g (93%). Mp. 78-79 °C (MeOH).

IR: 3450 (OH) and (NH).

^1H NMR (CDCl_3): 1.83 (1H, br s, -OH), 2.92 (2H, t, $J=6.5$ Hz, $-\text{CH}_2-\text{CH}_2\text{OH}$), 3.83 (2H, t, $J=6.5$ Hz, $-\text{CH}_2-\text{CH}_2\text{OH}$), 5.06 (2H, s, $-\text{O}-\text{CH}_2-\text{Ar}$), 6.92 (1H, d, $J=3.0$ Hz, H-2), 6.99-7.40 (8H, m, arom. H), 8.02 (1H, br s, NH).

MS: 267 (M^+), 236, 176, 158, 91 (100%); exact mass: 267.1262 (calc. for $\text{C}_{17}\text{H}_{17}\text{NO}_2$: 267.1259).

Preparation of compound 12

To compound 11 (2.64 g, 9.89 mmol) in abs. Et₂O (200 ml) (-5°C, Ar-atm) was added during 0.5 h PBr₃ (0.36 ml, 1.1 equiv.) in abs. Et₂O (10 ml). Stirring was continued for 1 h at -5°C. The reaction mixture was left standing in a refrigerator overnight. The solution was extracted with water and NaHCO₃^{aq} and dried over Na₂SO₄ to afford pure compound 12.

Y. 1.67 g (51%). Mp. 74-75°C (MeOH).

IR: 3450 (NH).

¹H NMR (CDCl₃): 3.33 (2H, t, J=6.0 Hz, -CH₂-CH₂Br), 3.56 (2H, t, J=6.0 Hz, -CH₂-CH₂Br), 5.08 (2H, s, -O-CH₂-Ar), 6.96 (1H, d, J=2.5 Hz, H-2), 7.07-7.38 (8H, m, arom. H), 8.02 (1H, br s, NH).

MS: 331, 329 (M⁺), 240, 238, 159, 91 (100%); exact mass: 329.0398 (calc. for C₁₇H₁₆NOBr: 329.0415).

Preparation of compound 13

Alkylation of 2-(4'-pyridyl)butanol (1.35 g, 8.94 mmol) with bromide 12 (2.95 g, 8.97 mmol) afforded salt 13.

Y. 4.11 g (96%). Amorphous material.

IR (KBr): 3350 (OH) and (NH).

Preparation of compound 14

Hydrochloric acid (6N, 4.5 ml) was added dropwise to a stirred cooled solution (0°C) of KCN (3.25 g, 50.00 mmol) in H₂O (3.5 ml) and layered with Et₂O (20 ml). MeOH (6 ml) and salt 13 (4.11 g, 8.54 mmol) were added, after which NaBH₄ (0.36 g, 9.52 mmol) was added during 0.5 h (0°C). Stirring was continued for 3.5 h at rt. The ethereal layer was separated and the aqueous layer was extracted several times with Et₂O. The combined organic layers were dried over Na₂SO₄ and evaporated to yield compound 14, which was used without purification in the next step.

Y. 3.56 g (98%). Viscous oil.

IR: 3350 (OH) and (NH), 2260 (CN).

¹H NMR (CDCl₃): 0.85 (3H, t, J=6.0 Hz, -CH₃), 3.49 (2H, d, J=6.0 Hz, -CH₂-OH), 3.92 (1H, m, H-2'), 5.08 (2H, s, -O-CH₂-Ar), 5.51 (1H, br s, H-5'), 6.92 (1H, d, J=2.0 Hz, H-2), 7.12-7.40 (8H, m, arom. H), 8.26 (1H, br s, NH).

MS: 429 (M⁺), 402, 250, 166, 91 (100%); exact mass (M⁺ - HCN): 402.2315 (calc. for C₂₆H₃₀N₂O₂: 402.2307).

Preparation of compound 15

Compound 14 (3.56 g, 8.30 mmol) was stirred with 50% acetic acid (200 ml) for 72 h (rt, Ar-atm). After evaporation and neutralization (2N Na₂CO₃) the

solution was extracted with CH_2Cl_2 . The combined organic extracts were dried over Na_2SO_4 and evaporated. The crude product was purified by column chromatography (alumina, $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2/\text{MeOH}$; 98/2).

Y. 2.20 g (66%). Amorphous material.

IR: 3300 (OH) and (NH).

^1H NMR (CDCl_3): 0.88 (3H, t, $J=6.0$ Hz, $-\text{CH}_3$), 5.08 (2H, s, $-\text{O}-\underline{\text{CH}_2}-\text{Ar}$), 5.57 (1H, br s, H-16), 6.73-7.41 (8H, m, arom. H), 8.55 (1H, br s, NH).

MS: 402 (M^+), 371, 329, 311, 276, 185, 91; exact mass: 402.2274 (calc. for $\text{C}_{26}\text{H}_{30}\text{N}_2\text{O}_2$: 402.2307).

Preparation of compound 16

Compound 15 (2.20 g, 5.47 mmol), acetic anhydride (20 ml) and two drops of pyridine were stirred for 24 h (rt, Ar-atm). The solution was poured into ice water, neutralized (2 M NaOH) and extracted with CH_2Cl_2 . The combined extracts were dried over Na_2SO_4 to afford pure compound 16.

Y. 2.28 g (94%). Amorphous material.

IR: 3400 (NH), 1740 (C=O).

^1H NMR (CDCl_3): 0.86 (3H, t, $J=6.0$ Hz, $-\text{CH}_3$), 1.99 and 2.02 (3H, two s, -OAc), 5.07 (2H, s, $-\text{O}-\underline{\text{CH}_2}-\text{Ar}$), 5.50 (1H, br s, H-16), 6.73-7.39 (8H, m, arom. H), 8.55 (1H, br s, NH).

MS: 444 (M^+), 353, 329, 276, 185, 91 (100%); exact mass: 444.2405 (calc. for $\text{C}_{28}\text{H}_{32}\text{N}_2\text{O}_3$: 444.2413).

Preparation of compound 17

To compound 16 (2.28 g, 5.14 mmol) in abs. CH_2Cl_2 (8 ml) were added *p*-dimethylaminopyridine (DMAP) (63 mg, 0.1 equiv.) and di-*t*-butyl dicarbonate [$(\text{BOC})_2\text{O}$] (1.35 g, 1.2 equiv.) with stirring (rt, Ar-atm). After 2h the mixture was evaporated and purified by column chromatography (silica, $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2/\text{MeOH}/\text{Et}_3\text{N}$; 99/0.75/0.25) to afford pure compound 17.

Y. 1.97 g (70%). Viscous oil.

IR: 1740 and 1730 (2 x C=O).

^1H NMR (CDCl_3): 0.84 (3H, t, $J=7.0$ Hz, $-\text{CH}_3$), 1.62 (9H, s, $-\text{C}(\text{CH}_3)_3$), 1.99 (3H, s, -OAc), 4.02 (1H, m, H-3), 5.04 (2H, s, $-\text{O}-\underline{\text{CH}_2}-\text{Ar}$), 5.49 (1H, br s, H-16), 6.86-7.40 (7H, m, arom. H), 7.95 (1H, m, H-12).

MS: 544 (M^+), 488, 487, 320, 210, 91 (100%); exact mass: 544.2973 (calc. for $\text{C}_{33}\text{H}_{40}\text{N}_2\text{O}_5$: 544.2937).

Preparation of compound 18

Catalytic hydrogenation (PtO_2 , 24 h) of compound 17 (370 mg, 0.68 mmol)

afforded crude compound 18, which was purified by TLC (silica, CH₂Cl₂/MeOH; 90/10).

Y. 233 mg (75%). Viscous oil.

IR: 3400 (OH), 1730 (2 x C=O).

¹H NMR (CDCl₃): 0.95 (3H, t, J=6.0 Hz, -CH₃), 1.63 (9H, s, -C(CH₃)₃), 2.02 (3H, s, -OAc), 4.10 (1H, br s, H-3), 6.42-6.75 (2H, m, H-9, 11), 7.67 (1H, m, H-12).

MS: 456 (M⁺), 400, 399 (100%), 355, 285, 212; exact mass: 456.2639 (calc. for C₂₆H₃₆N₂O₅: 456.2625).

Preparation of compound 19

Compound 18 (160 mg, 0.35 mmol) was stirred in HCOOH (8 ml) for 70 h (rt, Ar-atm). After evaporation and neutralization (10% Na₂CO₃) the solution was extracted with CH₂Cl₂. The combined extracts were dried over Na₂SO₄ and evaporated to yield pure compound 19.

Y. 123 mg (98%). Amorphous material.

IR: 3400 (OH) and (NH), 1730 (C=O).

¹H NMR (CDCl₃): 0.89 (3H, def, -CH₃), 2.02 (3H, s, -OAc), 4.05 (1H, br s, H-3), 6.62-7.25 (3H, m, H-9, 11, 12), 8.14 (1H, br s, NH).

MS: 356 (M⁺, 100%), 355, 297, 241, 212; exact mass: 356.2065 (calc. for C₂₁H₂₈N₂O₃: 356.2100).

Preparation of compound 6

LAH treatment of compound 19 (123 mg, 0.35 mmol) in abs. THF for 2.5 h (rt, Ar-atm) afforded compound 6, which was purified by TLC (silica, CH₂Cl₂/MeOH; 90/10).²⁴

Y. 76 mg (70%). Amorphous material.

IR (KBr): 3350 (OH) and (NH).

¹H NMR (MeOH-d₄): 0.93 (3H, def, -CH₃), 3.85 (3H, s, -OCH₃), 4.09 (1H, br s, H-3), 6.56-7.20 (3H, m, H-9, 11, 12).

MS: 314 (M⁺), 313 (100%), 241, 213; exact mass: 314.1992 (calc. for C₁₉H₂₆N₂O₂: 314.1990).

Preparation of compound 7

To compound 6 (20 mg, 0.06 mmol) in MeOH (5 ml) was added gradually diazomethane/Et₂O (total reaction time 3 h) to afford compound 7.

Y. 18 mg (85%). Amorphous material.

IR: 3350 (OH) and (NH).

Syntheses of hunterburnines and corynantheidols

^1H NMR ($\text{CDCl}_3/\text{MeOH-d}_4$; 8/1): 0.93 (3H, def, $-\text{CH}_3$), 3.85 (3H, s, $-\text{OCH}_3$), 4.10 (1H, br s, H-3), 6.68-7.31 (3H, m, H-9, 11, 12).

MS: 328 (M^+ , 100%), 327, 313, 255; exact mass: 328.2132 (calc. for $\text{C}_{20}\text{H}_{28}\text{N}_2\text{O}_2$: 328.2151).

Preparation of compound 20

Alkylation of 3-ethyl-4-(2'-hydroxyethyl)pyridine (1.15 g, 7.62 mmol) with compound 12 (2.52 g, 7.63 mmol) afforded compound 20.

Y. 3.29 g (90%). Amorphous material.

Preparation of compound 21

Compound 21 was prepared from compound 20 (2.64 g, 5.49 mmol) using the procedure described for compound 14 (*vide supra*).

Y. 2.30 g (98%). Viscous oil.

IR: 3450 (OH) and (NH), 2270 (CN).

^1H NMR (CDCl_3): 1.01 (3H, t, $J=7.0$ Hz, $-\text{CH}_3$), 3.64 (2H, t, $J=6.5$ Hz, $-\text{CH}_2-\text{OH}$), 3.92 (1H, m, H-2'), 5.09 (2H, s, $-\text{O}-\text{CH}_2-\text{Ar}$), 6.97 (1H, d, $J=2.4$ Hz, H-2), 7.11-7.52 (8H, m, arom. H), 8.13 (1H, br s, NH).

MS: 429 (M^+), 402, 357, 250, 166, 91 (100%); exact mass ($\text{M}^+ - \text{HCN}$): 402.2321 (calc. for $\text{C}_{26}\text{H}_{30}\text{N}_2\text{O}_2$: 402.2307).

Preparation of compound 22

Compound 22 was prepared from compound 21 (2.00 g, 4.66 mmol) using the procedure described for compound 15 (*vide supra*).

Y. 1.03 g (55%). Mp. 207-208°C (MeOH).

IR: 3300 (OH) and (NH).

^1H NMR ($\text{CDCl}_3/\text{MeOH-d}_4$; 5/1): 1.02 (3H, t, $J=7.0$ Hz, $-\text{CH}_3$), 3.65 (2H, t, $J=6.5$ Hz, $-\text{CH}_2-\text{OH}$), 5.08 (2H, s, $-\text{O}-\text{CH}_2-\text{Ar}$), 6.74-7.52 (8H, m, arom. H).

MS: 402 (M^+), 311, 276 (100%), 185, 91; exact mass: 402.2280 (calc. for $\text{C}_{26}\text{H}_{30}\text{N}_2\text{O}_2$: 402.2307).

Preparation of compound 8

Catalytic hydrogenation (PtO_2 , 30 h) of compound 22 (324 mg, 0.81 mmol) afforded crude compound 8, which was purified by TLC (silica, $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2/\text{MeOH}$; 90/10).

Y. 153 mg (60%). Amorphous material.

IR: 3400 (OH), 2830 and 2780 (Bohlmann bands).

^1H NMR ($\text{CDCl}_3/\text{MeOH-d}_4$; 5/1): 0.92 (3H, def, $-\text{CH}_3$), 6.59-7.50 (3H, H-9, 11, 12).

MS: 314 (M^+), 313 (100%), 269, 186; exact mass: 314.1987 (calc. for $C_{19}H_{26}N_2O_2$: 314.1990).

Preparation of compound 9

To compound 8 (24 mg, 0.08 mmol) in MeOH (5 ml) was added gradually diazomethane/Et₂O (total reaction time 3 h) to afford compound 7.

Y. 23 mg (88%). Amorphous material.

IR: 3350 (OH), 2820 and 2760 (Bohlmann bands).

¹H NMR (CDCl₃/MeOH-d₄; 8/1): 0.91 (3H, def, -CH₃), 3.84 (3H, s, -OCH₃), 6.68-7.43 (3H, m, H-9, 11, 12).

MS: 328 (M^+ , 100%), 327, 283, 255, 200; exact mass: 328.2151 (calc. for $C_{20}H_{28}N_2O_2$: 328.2151).

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