

Cuticular Wax Profiles of Leaves of Some Traditionally Used African Bignoniaceae

Rainer Gormann^a, Lukas Schreiber^b, and Herbert Kolodziej^{a,*}

^a Institut für Pharmazie, Pharmazeutische Biologie, Freie Universität Berlin, Königin-Luise-Str. 2 + 4, D-14195 Berlin, Germany. Fax: +30-838-53729. E-mail: kolpharm@zedat.fu-berlin.de

^b Institut für Botanik, Abteilung Ökophysiologie, Rheinische-Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn, Kirschallee 1, D-53115 Bonn, Germany

* Author for correspondence and reprint requests

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The cuticular waxes, obtained by chloroform extraction from the leaves of four African Bignoniaceae, *Newbouldia laevis*, *Markhamia acuminata*, *Spathodea campanulata* and *Kigelia africana* were analysed by GC-MS. The principal constituents were represented by a homologous series of *n*-alkanes (C₂₃–C₃₃), *n*-alcohols (C₁₈–C₃₀) and related carboxylic acids (C₁₆–C₃₆). For *N. laevis* and *M. acuminata*, ursolic and oleanolic acid were the most abundant wax components (52 and 60%, respectively), followed by the C₂₉, the C₃₁ and the C₃₃ *n*-alkanes. The predominant components of *S. campanulata* were *n*-alcohols (35%), with octacosanol and triacontanol as the most abundant ones, while *K. africana* is distinguished from these three members by the conspicuous absence of triterpenoic acids and the predominance of *n*-alkanes (70%) with hentriacontane and tritriacontane as the main representatives. Other notable constituents were sterols, albeit present in trace amounts. The wax profiles are discussed in terms of taxonomic characters.

Key words: Bignoniaceae, Cuticular Wax, Chemotaxonomic Characters