



ISOCOUMARINS DERIVATIVES FROM *DIOSPYROS SOUBREANA* (EBENACEAE)

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ABSTRACT

Phytochemical investigation of the leaves and the bark of trunks of *Diospyros soubreana* led to the isolation of three isocoumarins namely 4-*O*-galloylnorbergenin (**1**), norbergenin (**2**) and bergenin (**3**). Their structures were elucidated by spectral analysis including MS, 1D and 2D-NMR spectroscopy. All these compounds were isolated from this plant for the first time.

KEYWORDS: Ebenaceae, *Diospyros soubreana*, isocoumarins, NMR spectroscopy.

INTRODUCTION

Diospyros (Ebenaceae) are deciduous and evergreen trees, shrubs and small bushes of over 700 species (Rashed et al., 2014) widely distributed in the tropical and subtropical regions of the world, notably in central Africa and south east Asia (Ganapaty et al., 2006; Zhong et al., 1984). This genus is the most important, both numerically and economically of the Ebenaceae family (Uc-Cachón et al., 2013). *Diospyros* are known for their richness in bioactive compounds, mainly triterpenoids (Ragasa et al., 2009; Fan et al., 2006; Nareeboon et al., 2006; Mallavadhani et al., 2001), naphthalene derivatives (Matsushita et al., 2010; Salae et al., 2010; Pathak et al., 2004; Gondo et al., 1999), naphtoquinones (Chang et al., 2007; Tangmouo et al., 2006; Ganapaty et al., 2005; Tezuka et al., 1973), flavonoids (Xie et al., 2015; Sahu et al., 2012; Ito et al., 2011) and coumarin derivatives (Akak et al., 2010; Paknikar et al., 1996).

Diospyros soubreana F. White (also named *Maba soubreana* A. Chev.) is shrub or tree to 5 m high in undergrowth of high closed-forest, from Ivory Coast to South Nigeria. The barks are black outside and pale orange-brown inside. The fruits are dark red. Few ethnopharmacological applications have been reported for this species.

Indeed, the leaves are used in Côte d'Ivoire as wound healing (Bouquet and Debray, 1974; Kerharo and Bouquet, 1950). To the best of our knowledge, no phytochemical study has been reported on this plant species. This investigation reports the isolation and structural elucidation of three isocoumarin derivatives.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The ¹H and ¹³C NMR, as well as 2D spectra (COSY, HSQC, HMBC and NOESY), were recorded on a Bruker Avance 400 Fourier Transform spectrometer operating at 400 MHz for ¹H spectra and 100 MHz for ¹³C using CD₃OD and Me₂CO-d₆ as deuterated solvents. The chemical shift was expressed in ppm from TMS (internal standard). ESIMS was acquired using a Bruker Esquire spectrometer. The chromatography columns were performed on silica gel (Merck, 40-63 μm, 35-70 μm and 60-200 μm) or Sephadex[®] LH-20 (Pharmacia). Thin-layer chromatographies were carried out on aluminium plates coated with silica gel 60-F₂₅₄ (Merck), and visualized with UV light (254 and 366 nm) then sprayed with vanillin-H₂SO₄ and FeCl₃.

Plant material

Leaves and bark of trunks of *D. soubreana* were collected in July 2014 in « Petit Yapo » forest, Agboville Department, south-east of Côte d'Ivoire. The plant samples were identified by a botanist of Centre National de Floristique (CNF), University Félix Houphouët-Boigny of Cocody-Abidjan, where voucher specimens are deposited. The samples were dried at room temperature, then ground.

Isolation

100 g of leaves powder were extracted by maceration with the mixture water/ethanol (70: 30) for 24 h at room temperature. After filtration and the removal of the solvent under reduced pressure, a residue of 25.5 g was obtained. 15 g of this residue was suspended in ethanol

70% and extracted sequentially with increasing polarity solvents to give after evaporation 0.88 g of *n*-hexane (DSFH), 1.82 g of dichloromethane (DSFD) and 2.39 g of ethyl acetate (DSFA) extracts.

Powdered bark of trunks (120 g) were extracted in a Soxhlet apparatus, firstly with petroleum ether and then with dichloromethane, followed by maceration in ethyl acetate at room temperature. Extracts were filtered and concentrated under reduced pressure to give 0.8 g of petroleum ether (DSTPE), 1.2 g of dichloromethane (DSTD) and 9.7 g of ethyl acetate (DSTA) extracts.

An other part of the dried leaves (100 g) was treated as above (in a Soxhlet apparatus followed by maceration at room temperature) with petroleum ether, ethyl acetate and methanol to give 2.7 g, 6 g and 15.9 g of the corresponding extracts (DSFPE, DSFA1 and DSFM respectively).

The leaves ethyl acetate extract (DSFA) (401.7 mg) was subjected to a silica gel CC (40-63 μ m) eluting with a gradient elution of hexane/ethyl acetate (50: 50 \rightarrow 0: 100) then ethyl acetate/methanol (95: 5) to give two fractions (F1 and F2). The fraction F2 (160.9 mg) was successively subjected to a Sephadex[®] LH-20 column (CHCl₃/MeOH, 1: 1) and a silica gel (35-70 μ m) column (EtOAc/MeOH, 80: 20) to yield 28 mg of 4-*O*-galloylnorbergenin (**1**).

3 g of the extract DSTA were chromatographed on a silica gel (60-200 μ m) column (CH₂Cl₂/EtOAc, 100: 0 \rightarrow 0: 100) to give six fractions (T1-T6). Fraction T5 (791 mg) was treated on a silica gel (60-200 μ m) using EtOAc/MeOH (90: 10) as eluent to provide 98 mg of

Bergerin (**3**).

A part of the extract DSFM (2 g) was subjected to a vacuum chromatography eluted with EtOAc/MeOH (100: 0 \rightarrow 70: 30) to give four fractions (M1-M4). The fraction M3 (593.9 mg) was purified by silica gel chromatography (35-70 μ m) with CHCl₃/MeOH (70: 30) to give two major fractions (M3A and M3B). The fraction M3B (215.4 mg) was treated on Sephadex[®] LH-20 column (CHCl₃/MeOH, 70: 30) and preparative thin layer chromatography (Merck 60F₂₅₄, 20 x 20 x 0.5 cm, CHCl₃/MeOH, 70: 30) to yield 16.3 mg of Norbergenin (**2**).

Identification of compounds **1**, **2** and **3**

4-*O*-galloylnorbergenin (**1**): Brown amorphous powder; ¹H and ¹³C NMR (400 MHz, Me₂CO-*d*₆) data in **Table 1**; ESI-MS (*m/z*): 465 [M-H]⁻, 489 [M+Na]⁺, 955 [2M+Na]⁺ (molecular formula C₂₀H₁₈O₁₃).

Norbergenin (**2**): White needles; ¹H and ¹³C NMR (400 MHz, CD₃OD) data in **Table 1**; molecular formula C₁₃H₁₄O₉.

Bergerin (**3**): White shiny crystals; ¹H and ¹³C NMR (400 MHz, CD₃OD) data in **Table 1**; ESI-MS (*m/z*): 329 [M+H]⁺ (molecular formula C₁₄H₁₆O₉).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Purification of the bark of trunks ethyl acetate extract and the leaves methanol extract by chromatography on various stationary phases (silica, Sephadex[®] LH-20 and preparative thin layer) led to compounds **1**, **2** and **3**. This paper deals with their structural elucidation.

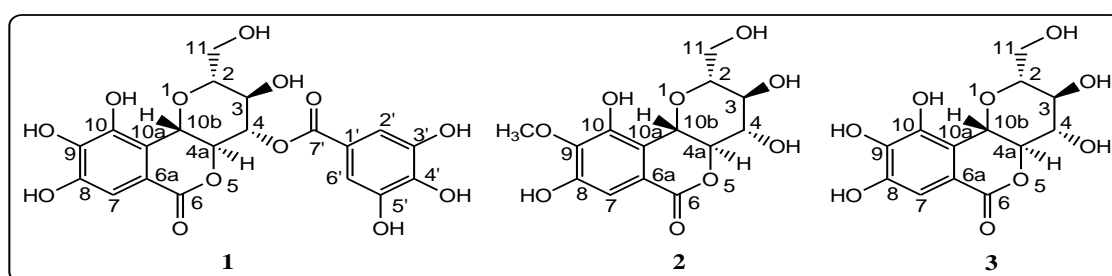


Figure 1: Structures of compounds **1**, **2** and **3**.

Compound **1** (**Fig. 1**) was isolated as a brown amorphous powder. In thin-layer chromatography, **1** was detected using a UV lamp at 254 nm as a dark brown spot by spraying with FeCl₃ solution indicating its phenolic nature. Its ESI mass spectrum showed a pseudo-molecular ion at *m/z* 465.2 [M-H]⁻ in agreement with the molecular formula C₂₀H₁₈O₁₃.

The ¹H and ¹³C NMR spectra of **1** (**Table 1**) showed a galloyl group in the aromatic region [δ_{H} 7.14 (2H, s, galloyl-2', 6')] and [δ_{C} 166.3 (C-7'), 146.2 (C-3', 5'), 139.0 (C-4'), 121.6 (C-1'), 110.3 (C-2', 6')] (Subeki *et al.*, 2005; Li *et al.*, 2015), along with a norbergenin

nucleus [δ_{H} 7.08 (1H, s, H-7), 5.56 (1H, dd, *J* = 8.5, 9.8 Hz, H-4), 5.13 (1H, d, *J* = 10.5 Hz, H-10b), 4.39 (1H, dd, *J* = 9.8, 10.5 Hz, H-4a), 3.82 (1H, m, H-2), 3.78 (1H, m, H-3), 3.76 (2H, m, H-11)] and [δ_{C} 163.6 (C-6), 146.8 (C-8), 143.3 (C-10), 140.0 (C-9), 114.7 (C-10a), 116.6 (C-6a), 110.7 (C-7), 82.7 (C-2), 78.4 (C-4a), 75.9 (C-4), 73.9 (C-10b), 70.1 (C-3), 62.4 (C-11)] (Saijo *et al.*, 1990; Taneyama *et al.*, 1983). The linkage of norbergenin nucleus and galloyl moieties was determined to be between the C-4 of the norbergenin nucleus and the C-7' of the galloyl moiety (in *J*-3) because of the cross-peak observed in HMBC spectrum between the H-4 (norbergenin nucleus) and C-7' (galloyl moiety) (**Fig. 2**).

From these spectral data, the structure of compound **1** (Tangmouo et al., 2009; Saijo et al., 1990) was elucidated as 4-*O*-galloylnorbergenin (Fig. 1)

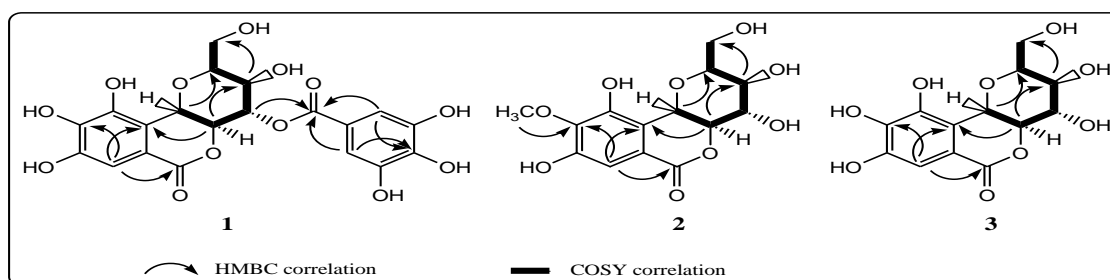


Figure 2: Important COSY and HMBC correlations for compounds **1**, **2** and **3**.

Compound **2** obtained as white needles, gave a positive result for the ferric chloride reaction, revealing its phenolic nature. ^1H and ^{13}C NMR spectra of **2** (Table 1) were quite similar to those of **1** except the lack of the galloyl group. Analysis of these spectra indicated that compound **2** was norbergenin (Nazir et al., 2011). Indeed, the ^1H spectrum of **2** exhibited one aromatic proton at δ 7.09 (1H, s) and a C-glycosyl moiety at δ 3.42-4.94. The ^{13}C spectrum of **2** exhibited 13 carbon signals including a C-glycosyl moiety at δ 83.0 (C-2), 81.5 (C-4a), 75.7 (C-4), 74.4 (C-10b), 72.0 (C-3) and 62.8 (C-11), one substituted benzene moiety at δ 147.4 (C-8), 143.8 (C-10), 141.5 (C-9), 117.4 (C-6a), 114.2 (C-10a) and 111.0 (C-7), and one ester carbonyl carbon at δ 166.6 (C-6) characteristics of norbergenin (Fig. 1) (Taneyama et al., 1983).

Compound **3** was isolated as white shiny crystals. It also gave a positive test with ferric chloride indicating its phenolic nature. ^1H and ^{13}C NMR spectra of **3** which were very similar to those of **2** indicated that the two

compounds had in common the norbergenin nucleus with the presence of one supplementary methoxyl group in the structure of **3**. Indeed, the norbergenin nucleus was perceptible at [δ_{H} 7.08 (1H, s, H-7), 3.81 (1H, dd, J = 8.8, 9.4 Hz, H-4), 4.95 (1H, d, J = 10.4 Hz, H-10b), 4.06 (1H, dd, J = 9.4, 10.4 Hz, H-4a), 3.66 (1H, dd, J = 6.0, 8.8 Hz, H-2), 3.43 (1H, dd, J = 8.8, 9.5 Hz, H-3), 3.69 (2H, m, H-11)] and [δ_{C} 165.8 (C-6), 152.4 (C-8), 149.5 (C-10), 142.3 (C-9), 117.3 (C-10a), 119.5 (C-6a), 111.1 (C-7), 83.1 (C-2), 81.5 (C-4a), 75.7 (C-4), 74.3 (C-10b), 71.9 (C-3), 62.7 (C-11)] (Saijo et al., 1990; Taneyama et al., 1983). In addition, the additional methoxyl group was observable at δ 3.90 (1H, s) ppm on the ^1H NMR spectrum, and at δ 60.9 ppm on the ^{13}C NMR spectrum. The position of the hydroxyl group on carbon C-9 (δ_{C} 142.3) was specified by the correlation between protons at δ 3.90 ppm and that carbon on the HMBC spectrum. Based on the above evidence and according to the literature (Saijo et al., 1990; Nazir et al., 2011), the structure of **3** was determined to be bergenin (Fig. 1).

Table 1. ^1H and ^{13}C NMR data for compounds **1**, **2** and **3**.

Position	1 ^a		2 ^b		3 ^b	
	^1H	^{13}C	^1H	^{13}C	^1H	^{13}C
2	3.82, 1H, m	82.7	3.68, 1H, m	83.0	3.66, 1H, dd (8.8, 6)	83.1
3	3.78, 1H, m	70.1	3.42, 1H, m	72.0	3.43, 1H, dd (9.5, 8.8)	71.9
4	5.56, 1H, dd (9.80, 8.5)	75.9	3.81, 1H, dd (9.2, 8.8)	75.7	3.81, 1H, dd (9.4, 8.8)	75.7
4a	4.39, 1H, dd (10.5, 9.8)	78.4	4.03, 1H, dd (10.4, 9.2)	81.5	4.06, 1H, dd (10.4, 9.4)	81.5
6	-	163.6	-	166.6	-	165.8
6a	-	116.6	-	117.4	-	119.5
7	7.08, 1H, s	110.7	7.09, 1H, s	111.0	7.08, 1H, s	111.1
8	-	146.8	-	147.4	-	152.4
9	-	140.0	-	141.5	-	142.3
10	-	143.3	-	143.8	-	149.5
10a	-	114.7	-	114.2	-	117.3
10b	5.13, 1H, d (10.5)	73.9	4.94, 1H, d (10.4)	74.4	4.95, 1H (10.4)	74.3
11	3.76, 2H, m	62.4	3.68, 2H, m	62.8	3.69, 2H, m	62.7
1'	-	121.6	-	-	-	-
2', 6'	7.14, 2H, s	110.3	-	-	-	-
3', 5'	-	146.2	-	-	-	-
4'	-	139.0	-	-	-	-
7'	-	166.3	-	-	-	-
OCH ₃	-	-	-	-	3.90, 3H, s	60.9

a: In Me₂CO-d₆

b: In CD₃OD

Isocoumarins are a class of compounds distributed sporadically but broadly in nature. They have been isolated from microorganisms, insects and plants. In Angiosperms, they are frequently found in the families Fabaceae, Asteraceae, Apiaceae and Rutaceae (Bruneton, 2009). Moreover, they are to a small extent represented in Euphorbiaceae and in their sister taxon, Phyllanthaceae (*Flueggea* genus) (Seigler, 1994). These compounds possess various biological activities such as anti-inflammatory, antifungal, antimicrobial, antibacterial, phytotoxic, cytotoxic and antiviral properties (Saddiqa et al., 2017; Pal et al., 2011; Hill, 1986).

CONCLUSION

This present study investigated for the first time the isolation and structural determination of compounds from *Diospyros soubreana*. It led to the isolation and characterization of three isocoumarins derivatives: bergenin, norbergenin and 4-*O*-galloylnorbergenin, all isolated for the first time from this species. This work thus contributes to the chemical characterization of this species.

To provide scientific evidence of traditional medicine uses of *D. soubreana*, biological assessments will be carried out.

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