Published in final edited form as:

Tetrahedron. 2008 ; 64(22): 5246–5253. doi:10.1016/j.tet.2008.03.038.

The Application of Vinylogous Iminium Salt Derivatives and Microwave Accelerated Vilsmeier-Haack Reactions to Efficient Relay Syntheses of the Polycitone and Storniamide Natural Products

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Abstract

Studies directed at the synthesis of polycitone and storniamide natural products via vinylogous iminium salts and microwave accelerated Vilsmeier-Haack formylations are described. The successful strategy relies on the formation of a 2,4-disubstituted pyrrole or a 2,3,4-trisubstituted pyrrole from a vinamidinium salt or vinamidinium salt derivative followed by formylation at the 5-position of the pyrrole. Subsequent transformations of the selectively formylated pyrroles lead to efficient and regiocontrolled relay syntheses of the respective pyrrole containing natural products.

Keywords

Vinamidinium salt; Pyrrole; Marine natural product; microwave acceleration

1. Introduction

Pyrrole containing marine natural products and their derivatives continue to be a source of compounds with very interesting biological properties¹. A number of recent reviews² have appeared, which describe synthetic efforts as well as structure activity relationships and mode of action studies for this large and diverse class of substances.

Our own interest in this area of chemistry has allowed us to develop relay and total syntheses of certain members of this class of alkaloids (Fig. 1) such as rigidin³, rigidin E³, polycitone A and B⁴, ningalin B⁵ and lukianol A⁶. Edstrom⁷ and Sakamoto⁸ have successfully synthesized rigidin, while Steglich has synthesized polycitone A and B⁹, ningalin¹⁰ type natural products and various other members of this class of substances. Boger has also had a major synthetic effort in this area and has completed syntheses of ningalins A and B¹¹, lukianol

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A¹¹ and permethyl storniamide A¹¹. The research groups of Banwell¹², Furstner¹³, Handy¹⁴, Bullington¹⁵, Iwao¹⁶, Ishibashi¹⁷ and Ruchirawat¹⁸ have also made major contributions to this area of chemistry. The majority of the synthetic methods to date rely on the efficient and regiocontrolled preparation of 2-carboalkoxy-3,4-diarylpyrroles (**11**) or 2,5-dicarboalkoxy-3,4-diarylpyrroles (**12**) as key synthetic intermediates (Fig. 2), which are further elaborated to the desired natural products. Interestingly, the conversion of the 2-carboalkoxy-3,4-diarylpyrroles (**11**) to the 2,5-dicarboalkoxy-3,4-diarylpyrroles (**12**) has not been utilized presumably due to the surprising lack of reactivity of these 2,3,4-trisubstituted pyrroles (**11**) at the 5 position with carbon bearing electrophiles. Such a transformation becomes quite significant for the preparation of the 2,3,4,5-tetrasubstituted pyrrole core, which is found in the majority of the natural products that have been previously mentioned. Consequently, any new synthetic methods or strategies, which provide for the efficient and regiocontrolled preparation of these two scaffolds (**11** and **12**) is of importance.

2. Results and Discussions

Our research efforts have demonstrated the ability to efficiently prepare 4-aryl-2-carbethoxypyrroles¹⁹, 5-aryl-2-carbethoxypyrroles²⁰, 3-aryl-2-carbethoxypyrroles²¹ and 3,4-diaryl-2-carbethoxypyrroles²² from vinylogous iminium salts (**14** and **18**) and their derivatives (**19**) with regiochemical control. Our general strategy for the synthesis of 4-aryl-2-carbethoxypyrroles (**15**) and 3,4-diaryl-2-carbethoxypyrroles (**20**) is described in Scheme 1.

As mentioned previously, the ability to introduce carbon bearing electrophiles at the 5 position (ortho to nitrogen) of highly substituted pyrroles is quite significant. The Vilsmeier-Haack reagent²³ has traditionally been a useful means to introduce a formyl group at this position but, at least in the substrates that we have examined (such as **21a-21k**, Table 1), traditional heating of the pyrrole with DMF and phosphorous oxychloride does not provide a clean and high yielding method (typically in the 30% range) for the preparation of the desired formylpyrroles. We have had some success in the past in applying microwave acceleration conditions to reactions that appeared sluggish for either electronic or steric reasons. Consequently, we decided to subject some of our representative pyrroles to a microwave accelerated version of the Vilsmeier-Haack reaction and the results are presented in Table 1. To date the only example of microwave acceleration in the presence of the Vilsmeier-Haack reagent is described by Perumal²⁴ and coworkers in their preparation of chloroenals (such as **19** in Scheme 1) from aryl methyl ketones.

The microwave accelerated Vilsmeier-Haack reaction is typically carried out in a microwave reactor at 100°C for 14 minutes and produces a near analytically pure product that requires minimal if any purification. In fact, we have found that in most cases the reaction is fully complete within 3–4 minutes. The regiochemistry of compounds **22b** and **22h** was unambiguously established by the detection of a NOESY signal between the aldehyde hydrogen and the pyrrole hydrogen (**22b**) or pyrrole methyl hydrogens (**22h**). The equivalent NOESY signal could not be detected for compound **22a** due to the close proximity of the signals and broadness of the pyrrole hydrogen signal. NOESY, HSQC and HMBC spectra for these compounds (**22a**, **22b** and **22h**) allowed for the assignment of all signals in the proton and carbon NMR spectra (Table 2).

With the ability to achieve high yielding, regioselective, formylations in place, we turned our attention to using this methodology to prepare polycitone- and storniamide-type natural products. We have previously reported⁴ a relay synthesis of polycitone A and B based upon a key intermediate (**25**) prepared by the Steglich group⁹ in their synthesis of the polycitones (Scheme 2). The precursor to the symmetrical diacylpyrrole (**25**), as developed by Steglich and coworkers, is a symmetrical pyrroledicarboxylic acid (**24**), which also can be viewed as a relay

intermediate for the preparation of the polycitones. Consequently, using the appropriate formylated pyrrole (**22k**), we were able to rapidly carry out a synthesis (Scheme 3) of this tetrasubstituted pyrrole (**24**) in two steps and in 62% yield from **22k** and thereby accomplish a second relay synthesis of the polycitones. Interestingly, we also applied microwave acceleration reaction conditions to the preparation of pyrrole **21k** (analogous to the conversion of **19** to **20** in Scheme 1) by reacting the corresponding chloroal with glycine ethyl ester in which case a 91% yield of the 2,3,4-trisubstituted pyrrole (**21k**) was obtained.

When comparing the spectral data of our material (**24**) with those reported by Steglich, the symmetrical nature of the Steglich intermediate (**24**) made the comparisons very straightforward and we were able to observe an identical match by proton and carbon NMR.

Permethylstorniamide A (**10**) has been an attractive synthetic target by a number of international research groups^{13,16,25} and Boger's efforts¹¹ in this regard also rely on a symmetrical tetrasubstituted pyrrole (**27**) as a key precursor to this natural product (Scheme 4). This pyrrole (**27**) is prepared by Boger via his Diels-Alder/retrograde Diels-Alder strategy coupled with reductive hydrogenolysis chemistry.

Starting with the appropriate formylated pyrrole (**22a**, Table 1), oxidation with sodium chlorite with subsequent basic hydrolysis yields the pyrrole diacid (**29**) very cleanly and in an overall yield of 85% for two steps (Scheme 5). Methylation of both carboxylic acid groups with N,N-dimethylformamide dimethylacetal followed by iodination yields a tetrasubstituted pyrrole (**31**) in 50% yield for two steps. The bisalkylation step has not been fully optimized (51% yield) so there is substantial room for improvement in this regard. The iodination reaction consistently proceeds in very good yield (97%). The final reaction to make the Boger intermediate (**27**) to permethylstorniamide A¹¹ (**10**) and thereby complete a relay synthesis involves a Suzuki cross-coupling reaction of the iodopyrrole (**31**) with 3,4,5-trimethoxyphenylboronic acid resulting in a 65% yield of the key synthon (**27**). As was the case for the Steglich polycitone precursor (**24**), the Boger synthon (**27**) is highly symmetrical, which made the spectral comparisons of our material to the data reported by Boger very straightforward, in which case there was an identical match for the proton and carbon NMR.

3. Conclusions

In summary, Vilsmeier-Haack formylations of pyrrole substrates can be significantly improved by microwave accelerations. Such formylated pyrroles are key precursors to the ever growing class of pyrrole containing, marine natural products such as polycitone A and B as well as permethylstorniamide A. These formylation reactions in combination with our vinylogous iminium salt based approach to highly functionalized pyrroles provide efficient, flexible and regiocontrolled methodology for the preparation of this important class of natural products and related derivatives. These synthetic strategies and procedures should also provide rapid access to a wide range of highly functionalized pyrroles for subsequent biologically driven SAR studies.

4. Experimental

4.1 General

All chemicals were used as received from the manufacturer (Aldrich Chemicals and Fisher Scientific) and all reactions were carried out under a nitrogen or argon atmosphere. All solvents were dried over 4 angstrom molecular sieves prior to their use. NMR spectra were obtained on either a GE Omega 300 MHz spectrometer or a Bruker 500 MHz spectrometer in either CDCl₃, d₆-DMSO or d₆-acetone solutions. IR spectra were recorded on a Nicolet Avatar 320 FT-IR spectrometer with an HATR attachment. High resolution mass spectra were provided

by the Midwest Center for Mass Spectrometry at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln or on a Biotof Q electrospray mass spectrometer at the University of Richmond. Low resolution GC-MS spectra were obtained on a Shimadzu QP 5050 instrument. Melting points and boiling points are uncorrected. Flash chromatographic separations were carried out on a Biotage Horizon HFC or SP-1 instrument, which had been equipped with a silica cartridge, and ethyl acetate/hexane was used as the eluant. Microwave accelerated reactions were carried out in a Biotage Liberator system. Microwave reactions were controlled at a constant temperature whereby the microwave power was allowed to fluctuate so as to maintain a constant temperature and safe pressure limits. TLC analyses were conducted on silica plates with hexane/ethyl acetate as the eluant. Vinamidinium salts utilized for pyrrole formation were prepared according to standard procedures¹⁹. All purified reaction products gave TLC results, GC-MS spectra, flash chromatograms and ¹³C NMR spectra consistent with a sample purity of >95%.

4.1.1 Ethyl 4-(3,4,5-Trimethoxyphenyl)pyrrole-2-carboxylate (21a)—Into a 250 mL flask equipped with a magnetic stirring bar was placed 1.00g (2.27 mmol) of 3,4,5-trimethoxyphenylvinamidinium hexafluorophosphate along with 0.921g (6.60 mmol) of ethyl glycinate, 0.740g (6.58 mmol) of DABCO and 100 mL of DMF. The resulting mixture was heated at reflux for 3 h, cooled to room temperature and concentrated *in vacuo*. The residue was taken up in 100 mL of ethyl acetate and extracted with 3 × 50 mL of water and one 50 mL portion of brine and dried over anhydrous magnesium sulfate. The resulting solution was filtered, concentrated *in vacuo*, which resulted in a tan solid (0.553g, 80% yield), which exhibited the following properties: mp 140–141 °C; ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 9.14 (broad s, 1H), 7.28 (s, 2H), 7.20 (dd, *J* = 5.0 Hz and *J* = 2.5 Hz, 1H), 7.16 (d of d, *J* = 5.0 Hz and *J* = 2.5 Hz, 1H), 4.38 (q, *J* = 12 Hz, 2H), 3.93 (s, 6H) and 3.88 (s, 3H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃) δ 161.1, 153.6, 136.9, 130.5, 127.0, 123.7, 119.3, 112.4, 102.8, 61.0, 60.6, 56.2 and 14.5; IR (neat) 3270 and 1670cm⁻¹; HRMS (ES M+H) *m/z* calcd. for C₁₆H₂₀NO₅ 306.1336, found 306.1342.

4.1.2 Ethyl 2-Formyl-3-(3,4,5-trimethoxyphenyl)pyrrole-5-carboxylate (22a)

Method A: A 7 mL microwave reaction vessel was equipped with a stir bar and was charged with 5 mL of DMF and 0.302g (1.96 mmol) of phosphorous oxychloride and the resulting mixture was allowed to stir in an ice bath for 45 m. To this mixture was then added 0.200g (0.655 mmol) of ethyl 4-(3,4,5-trimethoxyphenyl)pyrrole-5-carboxylate in 1 mL of DMF. The reaction vessel was sealed (Crymper-seal) and heated by microwaves at 100 °C for 14 m in a Liberator Microwave Reactor. After cooling to room temperature, the reaction mixture was diluted with 20 mL of water and extracted with 3 × 20 mL of ethyl acetate. The combined organic layers were washed with 3 × 20 mL of brine and dried over anhydrous magnesium sulfate. The resulting solution was filtered, concentrated *in vacuo*, which resulted in a tan solid (0.166g, 76% yield). This material was of sufficient purity for use in subsequent reactions. However, an analytical sample was prepared by flash chromatography using an ethyl acetate/hexane gradient. The purified product exhibited the following physical properties: mp 110–111 °C; ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 9.88 (broad s, 1H), 9.83 (s, 1H), 7.03 (d, *J* = 2.7 Hz, 1H), 6.69 (s, 2H), 4.43 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.93 (s, 6H), 3.92 (s, 3H) and 1.43 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃) δ 180.6, 160.2, 153.6, 138.5, 136.1, 130.2, 128.2, 127.6, 115.2, 106.5, 61.5, 61.0, 56.3 and 14.3; IR (neat) 3256, 1715 and 1642cm⁻¹; HRMS (EI) *m/z* calcd. for C₁₇H₁₉NO₆ 333.1212, found 333.1215.

Method B: Into a 50 mL flask, which had been equipped with a condenser and magnetic stirring bar, was placed 10 mL of DMF followed by the addition of 0.901g (5.89 mmol) of phosphorous oxychloride. The resulting mixture was stirred in an ice bath for 45 mins and ethyl 4-(3,4,5-trimethoxyphenyl)pyrrole-5-carboxylate (0.500g, 1.96 mmol) was added. The resulting mixture was heated at reflux for 2 h. After cooling to room temperature, the reaction mixture

was diluted with 30 mL of water and extracted with 3 × 30 mL of ethyl acetate. The combined organic layers were washed with 3 × 30 mL of brine and dried over anhydrous magnesium sulfate. The resulting solution was filtered, concentrated *in vacuo*, which resulted in a tan solid (0.225g, 34% yield). This material was identical to the product obtained by method A as determined by ¹H NMR and TLC comparison.

4.1.3 Ethyl 2-Formyl-3-(4-bromophenyl)pyrrole-5-carboxylate (22b)—Using a procedure analogous to method A as described in section 4.1.2, a 70% yield of a solid with the following physical properties was obtained: mp 108–110 °C; ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 10.05 (broad s, 1H), 9.75 (s, 1H), 7.60 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.37 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.02 (d, *J* = 2.7 Hz, 1H), 4.42 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H) and 1.42 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃) δ 180.3, 160.1, 134.6, 132.1, 131.6, 130.5, 130.1, 127.8, 122.5, 115.2, 61.6 and 14.3; in addition, NOESY (1 second mixing time) cross peaks were observed between the resonances at 10.05 ppm (pyrrole NH) and 9.75 ppm (aldehyde hydrogen) establishing the location of the formyl group as being ortho to the pyrrole nitrogen; IR (neat) 3282, 1712 and 1663 cm⁻¹; HRMS (EI) *m/z* calcd. for C₁₄H₁₂NO₃Br 321.0001, found 320.9995.

4.1.4 Ethyl 2-Formyl-3-(3,4-dimethoxyphenyl)pyrrole-5-carboxylate (22c)—Using a procedure analogous to method A as described in section 4.1.2, a 63% yield of a solid with the following physical properties was obtained: mp 107–109 °C; ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 9.80 (broad s, 2H), 7.05 (dd, *J* = 2.0 Hz, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 1H), 7.00–7.02 (m, 2H), 6.97 (d, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 1H), 4.42 (q, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 2H), 3.95 (s, 6H) and 1.42 (t, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 3H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃) δ 180.7, 160.2, 149.4, 149.3, 136.0, 130.1, 127.6, 125.4, 121.7, 115.1, 112.2, 111.5, 61.5, 56.1, 56.0 and 14.3; IR (neat) 3277, 1711 and 1655 cm⁻¹; HRMS (EI) *m/z* calcd. for C₁₆H₁₇NO₅ 303.1107, found 303.1113.

4.1.5 Ethyl 2-Formyl-3-phenylpyrrole-5-carboxylate (22d)—Using a procedure analogous to method A as described in section 4.1.2, a 91% yield of a solid with the following physical properties was obtained: mp 110–112 °C; ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 9.87 (broad s, 1H), 9.79 (s, 1H), 7.43–7.52 (m, 5H), 7.05 (d, *J* = 3.0 Hz, 1H), 4.42 (q, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 2H) and 1.43 (t, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 3H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃) δ 180.8, 160.3, 136.0, 132.7, 130.3, 129.1, 128.9, 128.2, 127.7, 115.3, 61.5 and 14.3; IR (neat) 3269, 1716 and 1663 cm⁻¹; HRMS (EI) *m/z* calcd. for C₁₄H₁₃NO₃ 243.0895, found 243.0894.

4.1.6 Ethyl 2-Formyl-3-(4-chlorophenyl)pyrrole-5-carboxylate (22e)—Using a procedure analogous to method A as described in section 4.1.2, a 84% yield of a solid with the following physical properties was obtained: mp 96–98 °C; ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 9.97 (broad s, 1H), 9.76 (s, 1H), 7.45 (d, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 2H), 7.43 (d, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 2H), 7.02 (d, *J* = 3.0 Hz, 1H), 4.42 (q, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 2H) and 1.42 (t, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 3H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃) δ 180.3, 160.1, 134.5, 132.1, 131.6, 130.5, 130.1, 127.8, 122.6, 115.2, 61.6 and 14.3; IR (neat) 3256, 1719 and 1666 cm⁻¹; HRMS (EI) *m/z* calcd. for C₁₄H₁₂NO₃Cl 277.0506, found 277.0504.

4.1.7 Ethyl 2-Formyl-3-(4-methylphenyl)pyrrole-5-carboxylate (22f)—Using a procedure analogous to method A as described in section 4.1.2, a 67% yield of a solid with the following physical properties was obtained: mp 104–106 °C; ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 9.78 (broad s, 2H), 7.40 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 2H), 7.29 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 2H), 7.02 (d, *J* = 3.0 Hz, 1H), 4.41 (q, *J* = 6.9 Hz, 2H) and 1.42 (t, *J* = 6.9 Hz, 3H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃) δ 180.8, 160.3, 138.2, 136.1, 130.2, 129.7, 129.6, 128.9, 127.6, 115.2, 61.4, 21.2 and 14.3; IR (neat) 3258, 1697 and 1658 cm⁻¹; HRMS (EI) *m/z* calcd. for C₁₅H₁₅NO₃ 257.1052, found 257.1049.

4.1.8 Ethyl 2-Formyl-3-(4-methoxyphenyl)pyrrole-5-carboxylate (22g)—Using a procedure analogous to method A as described in section 4.1.2, a 81% yield of a solid with the

following physical properties was obtained: mp 103–105 °C; ^1H NMR (CDCl_3) δ 9.84 (broad s, H), 9.77(s, 1H), 7.43 (d, J = 9.0 Hz, 2H), 7.00– 7.02 (m, 3H), 4.42 (q, J = 7.0 Hz, 2H), 3.88 (s, 3H) and 1.42 (t, J = 7.0 Hz, 3H); ^{13}C NMR (CDCl_3) δ 180.7, 160.3, 159.8, 135.9, 130.2, 130.1, 127.7, 125.1, 115.1, 114.4, 61.4, 55.4 and 14.1; IR (neat) 3273, 1703 and 1662 cm^{-1} ; HRMS (EI) m/z calcd. for $\text{C}_{15}\text{H}_{15}\text{NO}_4$ 273.1001, found 273.0994.

4.1.9 Ethyl N-Methyl-2-formyl-3-(4-methylphenylpyrrole)-5-carboxylate (22h)—

Using a procedure analogous to method A as described in section 4.1.2, a 81% yield of a solid with the following physical properties was obtained: mp 75–76 °C; ^1H NMR (CDCl_3) δ 9.79 (s, 1H), 7.31 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.25 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 6.99 (s, 1H), 4.38 (q, J = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 4.35 (s, 3H), 2.42 (s, 3H) and 1.41 (t, J = 7.1 Hz, 3H); ^{13}C NMR (CDCl_3) δ 182.5, 160.9, 137.8, 137.7, 130.7, 130.1, 129.5, 129.3, 128.7, 116.8, 60.9, 34.8, 21.2 and 14.3; in addition, NOESY (3 seconds mixing time) cross peaks were observed between the resonances at 4.35 ppm (pyrrole N- CH_3) and 9.78 ppm (aldehyde hydrogen) establishing the location of the formyl group as being ortho to the pyrrole nitrogen; IR (neat) 1712 and 1662 cm^{-1} ; HRMS (EI) m/z calcd. for $\text{C}_{16}\text{H}_{17}\text{NO}_3$ 271.1208, found 271.1209.

4.1.10 Ethyl N-Methyl-2-formyl-3-(4-methoxyphenylpyrrole)-5-carboxylate (22i)—

Using a procedure analogous to method A as described in section 4.1.2, a 81% yield of a solid with the following physical properties was obtained: mp 73–75 °C; ^1H NMR (CDCl_3) δ 9.77 (s, 1H), 7.34 (d, J = 9.0 Hz, 2H), 6.97–6.99 (m, 3H), 4.36 (q, J = 7.0 Hz, 2H), 4.34 (s, 3H), 3.87 (s, 3H) and 1.40 (t, J = 7.0 Hz, 3H); ^{13}C NMR (CDCl_3) δ 182.4, 160.9, 159.6, 137.5, 130.7, 130.6, 128.7, 125.5, 116.7, 114.4, 60.9, 55.4, 34.8 and 14.3; IR (neat) 1706 and 1650 cm^{-1} ; HRMS (ES M+H) m/z calcd. for $\text{C}_{16}\text{H}_{18}\text{NO}_4$ 288.1230, found 288.1235.

4.1.11 Ethyl N-Methyl-2-formyl-3-(3,4-dimethoxyphenylpyrrole)-5-carboxylate (22j)—

Using a procedure analogous to method A as described in section 4.1.2, a 62% yield of a solid with the following physical properties was obtained: mp 107–109 °C; ^1H NMR (CDCl_3) δ 9.80 (s, 1H), 6.98 (s, 1H), 6.93– 6.95 (m, 3H), 4.37 (q, J = 7.5 Hz, 2H), 4.35 (s, 3H), 3.95 (s, 3H), 3.93 (s, 3H) and 1.41 (q, J = 7.5 Hz, 3H); ^{13}C NMR (CDCl_3) δ 182.5, 160.9, 149.1, 149.0, 137.6, 130.8, 128.7, 125.8, 122.3, 116.7, 112.7, 111.2, 61.0, 56.1, 56.0, 34.8 and 14.3; IR (neat) 1711 and 1655 cm^{-1} ; HRMS (ES M+H) m/z calcd. for $\text{C}_{17}\text{H}_{20}\text{NO}_5$ 318.1336, found 318.1346.

4.1.12 Ethyl 3,4-Bis(4-methoxyphenyl)pyrrole-2-carboxylate (21k)—A 7 mL microwave reaction vessel was equipped with a stir bar and was charged with 6 mL of DMF and 0.200g (0.660 mmol) of a mixture of E- and Z-3-chloro-2,3-bis(4-methoxyphenyl)-propenal, 0.277g (1.98 mmol) of glycine ethyl ester and 0.222g (1.98 mmol) of DABCO and the resulting mixture was allowed to stir for 30 m. The reaction vessel was sealed (Crymper-seal) and heated by microwaves at 150 °C for 14 m in a Liberator Microwave Reactor. After cooling to room temperature, the reaction mixture was diluted with 20 mL of water and extracted with 3 $\times$ 20 mL of ethyl acetate. The combined organic layers were washed with 3 $\times$ 20 mL of brine and dried over anhydrous magnesium sulfate. The resulting solution was filtered and concentrated *in vacuo*, which resulted in a solid (0.210g, 91% yield) that was identical by TLC and proton NMR to a sample previously reported by our research group. This material was of sufficient purity to be used in subsequent transformations without additional purification.

4.1.13 Ethyl 5-Formyl-3,4-bis(4-methoxyphenyl)pyrrole-2-carboxylate (22k)—

Using a procedure analogous to method A as described in section 4.1.2, a 74% yield of a solid with the following physical properties was obtained: mp 122–124 °C; ^1H NMR (CDCl_3) δ 9.88 (broad s, 1H), 9.62 (s, 1H), 7.08–7.14 (m, 4 H), 6.84 (d, J = 6.0 Hz, 2H), 6.82 (d, J = 6.0 Hz,

2H), 4.28 (q, $J = 6.9$ Hz, 2H), 3.82 (s, 6H) and 1.26 (t, $J = 6.9$ Hz, 3H); ^{13}C NMR (CDCl_3) δ 181.4, 160.3, 159.3, 158.8, 134.8, 131.9, 131.8, 130.3, 129.8, 124.6, 123.8, 123.6, 113.8, 113.1, 61.1, 55.2, 55.1 and 14.1; IR (neat) 1675 and 1630 cm^{-1} ; HRMS (EI) m/z calcd. for $\text{C}_{22}\text{H}_{21}\text{NO}_5$ 379.1420, found 379.1421.

4.1.14 5-Carbethoxy-3,4-bis(4-methoxyphenyl)pyrrole-2-carboxylic acid (26)—

Ethyl 5-Formyl-3,4-bis(4-methoxyphenyl)pyrrole-2-carboxylate (0.200g, 0.530 mmol) and 50 mL of DMSO were placed in a flask equipped with a stirring bar and cooled in an ice-water bath. A solution of sodium dihydrogen phosphate (0.023g, 0.160 mmol in 10 mL of water) was added to the flask and the reaction mixture was stirred for 15 min. Subsequently, a solution of sodium chlorite (0.146g, 1.59 mmol in 10 mL of water) was added to the flask dropwise with cooling and the resulting reaction mixture was stirred for 24 h at room temperature. The reaction mixture was then cooled in an ice-water bath and concentrated hydrochloric acid was added dropwise until the mixture reached a pH of approximately 2. The resulting mixture was vacuum filtered and the resulting solid dried under vacuum thereby producing 0.190g (88% yield) of material, which exhibited the following physical properties: mp 120–272 °C; ^1H NMR (CDCl_3) δ 12.62 (s, 1H), 11.95 (s, 1H), 7.00–7.03 (m, 4H), 6.79 (d, $J = 8.5$ Hz, 4H), 4.10 (q, $J = 7.0$ Hz, 2H), 3.71 (s, 6H) and 1.13 (t, $J = 7.0$ Hz, 3H); ^{13}C NMR (CDCl_3) δ 162.0, 160.4, 158.3, 158.3, 132.3, 132.2, 130.6, 130.1, 126.4, 126.3, 123.0, 121.9, 113.1, 113.0, 60.4, 55.4, 55.3 and 14.4; IR (neat) 3265, 1695 and 1663 cm^{-1} ; HRMS (EI) m/z calcd. for $\text{C}_{22}\text{H}_{21}\text{NO}_6$ 395.1369, found 395.1367.

4.1.15 3,4-Bis(4-methoxyphenyl)pyrrole-2,5-dicarboxylic acid (24)—Into a flask equipped with a stirring bar and reflux condenser, was placed 0.064g (1.10 mmol) of potassium hydroxide and 30 mL of a 50:50 mixture of ethanol:water. The mixture was stirred until all solid material dissolved and ethyl 5-formyl-3,4-bis(4-methoxyphenyl)pyrrole-2-carboxylate (0.150g, 0.380 mmol) was added to the flask and the resulting reaction mixture was refluxed for 20 h. The reaction mixture was then cooled in an ice-water bath and the mixture was adjusted to a pH of 2 by the slow addition of 6M hydrochloric acid, which resulted in the formation of a white solid. The solid was filtered and dried under vacuum yielding 0.097g (70% yield) of a solid product, which exhibited identical spectral properties to those reported by Steglich and coworkers: mp 200–202 °C (lit. 268–270 °C); ^1H NMR ($\text{DMSO}-d_6$) δ 12.58 (broad s, 2H), 11.58 (broad s, 1H), 6.96 (d, $J = 8.5$ Hz, 4H), 6.73 (d, $J = 8.5$ Hz, 4H) and 3.70 (s, 6H); ^{13}C NMR ($\text{DMSO}-d_6$) δ 161.9, 158.2, 132.2, 130.2, 126.5, 122.6, 113.1 and 55.3; IR (neat) 3240 and 1683 cm^{-1} ; HRMS (EI) m/z calcd. for $\text{C}_{20}\text{H}_{17}\text{NO}_6$ 367.1056, found 367.1052.

4.1.16 5-Carbethoxy-3-(3,4,5-trimethoxyphenyl)pyrrole-2-carboxylic acid (28)—

Ethyl 2-formyl-3-(3,4,5-trimethoxyphenyl)pyrrole-5-carboxylate (0.400g, 1.20 mmol) was placed in flask equipped with a magnetic stirring bar and to this was added 40 mL of DMSO followed by a solution containing 0.172g (1.20 mmol) of sodium dihydrogen phosphate in 10 mL of water. The mixture was cooled in an ice water bath and a solution of sodium chlorite (0.332g, 3.61 mmol) in 10 mL of water was added in a dropwise fashion to the reaction mixture. After stirring for 24 h at room temperature, the reaction mixture was adjusted to a pH of 2 with 6M hydrochloric acid while being cooled in an ice-water bath. The resulting mixture was extracted with 3×30 mL of ethyl acetate and the combined organic phases were washed with 30 mL of brine, dried over anhydrous magnesium sulfate and concentrated *in vacuo* to give 0.381g (91% yield) of a solid which exhibited the following physical properties: mp 118–120 °C; ^1H NMR (CDCl_3) δ 10.04 (broad s, 1H), 6.98 (d, $J = 2.5$ Hz, 1H), 6.84 (s, 2H), 4.01 (q, $J = 7.0$ Hz, 2H), 3.91 (s, 3H), 3.89 (s, 6H) and 1.41 (t, $J = 7.0$ Hz, 3H); ^{13}C NMR (CDCl_3) δ 163.8, 160.3, 152.7, 137.7, 133.4, 129.1, 125.6, 120.7, 116.7, 106.9, 61.3, 60.9, 56.2 and 14.3; IR (neat) 3283, 1706 and 1660 cm^{-1} ; HRMS (EI) m/z calcd. for $\text{C}_{17}\text{H}_{19}\text{NO}_7$ 349.1161, found 349.1160.

4.1.17 3-(3,4,5-trimethoxyphenyl)pyrrole-2,5-dicarboxylic acid (29)—Into a flask equipped with a stirring bar and reflux condenser, was placed 0.337g (6.01 mmol) of potassium hydroxide and 60 mL of a 50:50 mixture of ethanol:water. The mixture was stirred until all solid material dissolved and 5-carbethoxy-3-(3,4,5-trimethoxyphenyl)pyrrole-2-carboxylic acid (0.700g, 2.04 mmol) was added to the flask and the resulting reaction mixture was refluxed for 24 h. The reaction mixture was then cooled in an ice-water bath, adjusted to a pH of 2 by the slow addition of 6M hydrochloric acid and extracted with 3x30mL of ethyl acetate. The combined organic phases were washed with 1x30 mL of brine and dried over anhydrous magnesium sulfate. After removal of the drying agent, the solution was concentrated *in vacuo* to give 0.600g (93% yield) of a solid which exhibited the following physical properties: mp 178–179 °C (dec.); ¹H NMR (DMSO-D₆) δ 12.82 (broad s, 2H), 11.90 (broad s, 1H), 6.91 (d, *J* = 2.5 Hz, 1H), 6.85 (s, 2H), 3.77 (s, 6H) and 3.69 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (DMSO-D₆) δ 162.0, 161.6, 152.6, 137.1, 131.0, 130.3, 126.0, 122.8, 116.7, 107.3, 60.5 and 56.3; IR (neat) 2925, 1690 and 1660 cm⁻¹; HRMS (EI) *m/z* calcd. for C₁₅H₁₅NO₇ 321.0848, found 321.0851.

4.1.18 Dimethyl 3-(3,4,5-trimethoxyphenyl)pyrrole-2,5-dicarboxylate (30)—A flask was equipped with a magnetic stir bar and to it was added 3-(3,4,5-trimethoxyphenyl)pyrrole-2,5-dicarboxylic acid (0.600g, 1.87 mmol), 60 mL of dry chloroform and 1.345g (11.3 mmol) of N,N-dimethylformamide dimethyl acetal. The resulting mixture was stirred at room temperature for 36 h and diluted with 30 mL of water. After separating the two phases, the aqueous phase was extracted with 3x30 mL of ethyl acetate and the combined organic phases were washed with 30 mL of brine and dried over anhydrous magnesium sulfate. After removal of the drying agent, the solution was concentrated *in vacuo* to give 0.330g (51% yield) of a solid which exhibited the following physical properties: mp 118–118 °C; ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 9.80 (s, 1H), 6.98 (d, *J* = 3.5 Hz, 1H), 6.83 (s, 2H), 3.96 (s, 3H), 3.91 (s, 3H), 3.91 (s, 6H) and 3.87 (s, 3H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃) δ 160.6, 160.5, 152.7, 137.7, 132.4, 129.2, 124.7, 121.1, 116.6, 106.8, 60.9, 56.2, 52.1 and 51.9; IR (neat) 3278, 1721 and 1706 cm⁻¹; HRMS (EI) *m/z* calcd. for C₁₇H₁₉NO₇ 349.1161, found 349.1163.

4.1.19 Dimethyl 3-Iodo-4-(3,4,5-trimethoxyphenyl)pyrrole-2,5-dicarboxylate (31)—A flask was equipped with a magnetic stir bar and to it was added dimethyl 3-(3,4,5-trimethoxyphenyl)pyrrole-2,5-dicarboxylate (0.150g, 0.429 mmol), 15 mL of DMF and 0.072g (1.29 mmol) of potassium hydroxide. The resulting mixture was stirred for 1 h, iodine (0.142g, 0.558 mmol) was added to the flask and the resulting reaction mixture was stirred at room temperature for 20 h while being protected from any light. The reaction mixture was then cooled in an ice-water bath and quenched with 20 mL of a 10% by weight aqueous solution of sodium thiosulfate. The reaction mixture was diluted with additional water and extracted with 3x30 mL of ethyl acetate and the combined organic phases were washed with 30 mL of brine and dried over anhydrous magnesium sulfate. After removal of the drying agent, the solution was concentrated *in vacuo* to give 0.198g (97% yield) of a solid which exhibited the following physical properties: mp 213–216 °C; ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 10.02 (s, 1H), 6.55 (s, 2H), 3.99 (s, 3H), 3.94 (s, 3H), 3.89 (s, 6H) and 3.79 (s, 3H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃) δ 159.8, 159.7, 152.5, 137.8, 136.1, 129.1, 125.3, 122.3, 110.5, 108.1, 60.9, 56.2, 52.2 and 52.1; IR (neat) 3257, 1726 and 1706 cm⁻¹; HRMS (ES M+H) *m/z* calcd. for C₁₇H₁₉NO₇I 476.0201, found 476.0191.

4.1.20 Dimethyl Bis-3,4-(3,4,5-trimethoxyphenyl)pyrrole-2,5-dicarboxylate (27)—A 7 mL microwave reaction vessel was equipped with a stir bar and was charged with 5 mL of a 3:1 toluene:ethanol mixture, which was followed by the addition of 0.200g (0.421 mmol) of dimethyl 3-iodo-4-(3,4,5-trimethoxyphenyl)pyrrole-2,5-dicarboxylate, 0.138g (0.652 mmol) of 3,4,5-trimethoxyphenylboronic acid, 0.012g (0.0105 mmol) of palladium tetrakis(triphenylphosphine) and 3 drops of water. The reaction vessel was sealed (Crymper-seal) and heated by microwaves at 110 °C for 30 m in a Liberator Microwave Reactor. After

cooling to room temperature, the mixture was filtered through a silica gel plug, which was washed with additional ethyl acetate (30 mL). The combined organic filtrates were washed with 20 mL of 10% aqueous sodium hydroxide solution, 30 mL of brine and dried over anhydrous magnesium sulfate. After removal of the drying agent, the solution was concentrated *in vacuo* to give 0.140 g (65% yield) of a solid. An analytical sample was prepared by flash chromatography using an ethyl acetate/hexane gradient. The purified product exhibited identical spectral properties to those reported by Boger and coworkers: mp 159–160 °C (lit.^{11a} 153–155 °C); ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 9.86 (broad s, 1H), 6.40 (s, 4H), 3.85 (s, 12 H) and 3.67 (s, 12H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃) δ 160.6, 152.4, 137.4, 131.2, 128.1, 121.0, 108.5, 60.9, 56.1 and 51.9; IR (neat) 3242 and 1696 cm⁻¹; HRMS (ES M+H) m/z calcd. for C₂₆H₃₀NO₁₀ 516.1864, found 516.1869.

Acknowledgements

We thank the National Institutes of Health (grant no. R15-CA67236) for support of this research. We are exceedingly grateful to Mr. Dave Patteson of Biotage Inc. for the generous donation of a Horizon HFC and SP-1 flash chromatography systems, which were used in the majority of sample purifications, and also for the generous donation of a Personal Chemistry Emrys Liberator US microwave reaction system, which was utilized for all microwave accelerated reactions. In addition, we would like to thank the Midwest Center for Mass Spectrometry at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln for providing some of the high resolution mass spectral analysis on the compounds reported in this paper. Recent grants from the MRI program of the National Science Foundation for the purchase of a 500 MHz NMR spectrometer (CHE-0116492) and an electrospray mass spectrometer (CHE-0320669) are also gratefully acknowledged. We also thank Dr. Jeff Seeman and Dr. Wade Downey for helpful discussions during the preparation of this manuscript.

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- 1 X = Y = Z = H Rigidin
- 2 X = OCH₃ Y = Z = H Rigidin B
- 3 Y = OCH₃ X = Z = H Rigidin C
- 4 X = Y = OCH₃ Z = H Rigidin D
- 5 X = Y = H Z = CH₃ Rigidin E

6 Polycitron A X = 4-hydroxyphenethyl

7 Polycitron B X = H

8 Ningalin B

9 Lukianol A

10 Permethyl Stormiamide A

Figure 1.
Pyrrole Containing Marine Natural Products

Figure 2.
General Pyrrole Natural Product Motifs

Scheme 1.
Gupton Group Methodology for Pyrrole Synthesis

Scheme 2.
Steglich Synthesis of Polycitone B

Scheme 3.
Gupton Group Relay Synthesis of Polycitone A and B Synthon

Scheme 4.
Boger Approach to Permethyl Storniamide A

Scheme 5.
Gupton Group Relay Synthesis of Permethyl Storniamide A

Table 1

Microwave Accelerated Vilsmeier-Haack Formylation of Selected Pyrroles

<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> X Y 21 </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> $\xrightarrow{\text{POCl}_3, \text{DMF and microwave heating}}$ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> X Y 22 </div> </div>				
Compound 21	X	Y	Z	% Yield for 22
a	3,4,5-trimethoxyphenyl	H	H	76
b	4-bromophenyl	H	H	70
c	3,4-dimethoxyphenyl	H	H	63
d	phenyl	H	H	91
e	4-chlorophenyl	H	H	84
f	4-methylphenyl	H	H	67
g	4-methoxyphenyl	H	H	81
h	4-methylphenyl	H	Me	81
i	4-methoxyphenyl	H	Me	81
j	3,4-dimethoxyphenyl	H	Me	62
k	4-methoxyphenyl	4-methoxyphenyl	H	74

Table 2
NMR Chemical shift assignments for compounds **22a**, **22b** and **22h** via NOESY, HSQC and HMBC studies.

Label	$X'=X''=OMe, Z=H$ 22a		$X'=Br, X''=Z=H$ 22b		$X'=Z=Me, X''=H$ 22h	
	^{13}C NMR	1H NMR	^{13}C NMR	1H NMR	^{13}C NMR	1H NMR
Z		9.8 ^d		10.05	34.8	4.35
p2	130.2		130.1		130.7	
p3	136.1		134.6		137.7	
p4	115.2	7.03	115.2	7.02	116.8	6.99
p5	127.6		127.8		128.7	
k	180.6	9.83	180.3	9.75	182.5	9.79
x1	128.2		131.6		130.1	
x2	106.5	6.69	130.5	7.37	129.5	7.31
x3	153.6		132.1	7.60	129.3	7.25
x4	138.5		122.5		137.8	
X'	61.0	3.92			21.2	2.42
X''	56.3	3.93				
e1	160.2	4.43	160.1	4.42	160.9	4.38
e2	61.5	1.43	61.6	1.42	60.9	1.41
e3	14.3		14.3		14.3	

^d Due to broadness of the NH resonance and overlap with the sharp aldehyde signal, higher precision was not warranted.