

# Phytochemical Studies on the Leaves of *Xylia dolabriformis*

Fakir Shahidullah Tareq<sup>1,2</sup>, Md. Hossain Sohrab<sup>1</sup>, A. M. Sarwar Uddin Chowhdury<sup>2</sup>, Farhana Afroz<sup>1</sup>, M. Al-Mansur<sup>1</sup> and Choudhury M. Hasan<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Bangladesh Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, Dhaka-1205, Bangladesh

<sup>2</sup>Department of Applied Chemistry & Chemical Engineering, University of Dhaka, Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh

<sup>3</sup>Department of Pharmaceutical Chemistry, Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Dhaka, Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh

Three compounds were isolated from the petroleum ether extract of the dried leaves of *Xylia dolabriformis*. Based on the spectral evidence, their structures were determined to be taraxerol (**1**), taraxerone (**2**) and stigmasterol. This is the first report of occurrence of these compounds from *X. dolabriformis*.

*Xylia dolabriformis* Benth locally known as Lohakath is a big tree belonging to the family Leguminosae. The plant is widely distributed in the coastal forest and hill tracts of Bangladesh, India and Burma<sup>1,2</sup> and has been used in folk medicine to treat gonorrhoea, diarrhoea, vomiting and ulcers<sup>3</sup>. Previous investigations resulted in the isolation of tannins, oil and triterpene<sup>3</sup>. As part of our chemical investigation on Bangladeshi medicinal plants, we report, herein, the isolation and structure elucidation of two pentacyclic triterpenes taraxerol (**1**), taraxerone (**2**) and a steroid, stigmasterol from the petroleum ether extract. The structures of these compounds were determined by spectral and chemical analyses. The presence of triterpenoid skeleton in both of compounds **1** & **2** was suggested by the violet vanillin sulfuric acid test<sup>4</sup>.

The <sup>1</sup>H-NMR spectra were recorded using a Bruker AMX-400 (400 MHz in deuterated chloroform and the chemical shifts were referenced to the residual nondeuterated solvent signal. Column chromatography (CC) was performed on Kieselgel 60, (70-230 mesh, Merck). Precoated silica gel (60 PF<sub>25</sub>) plates were used for analytical purposes. The leaves of *X. dolabriformis* were collected from Savar, Dhaka during March 2008 and identified by Ms. Bushra Khan, Senior Scientific Officer, Bangladesh National Herbarium. A voucher specimen has been deposited in Bangladesh National Herbarium (DACB accession no. - 32761) Dhaka, Bangladesh. The dried and powdered leaf (725 gm) of *X. dolabriformis* was extracted with petroleum ether, dichloromethane and methanol sequentially using a Soxhlet apparatus. The concentrated crude petroleum ether extract (4.05 gm) was subjected to column chromatography by using gradients of petroleum ether/ethyl acetate, then ethyl acetate, followed by a gradient of ethyl acetate/methanol and finally with methanol to afford a total of 35 fractions (each 200 mL). Fractions 21, 15 and 29 upon repeated washing with petroleum ether gave compounds **1** (10 mg), **2** (15 mg) and stigmasterol (15 mg), respectively as amorphous solid.

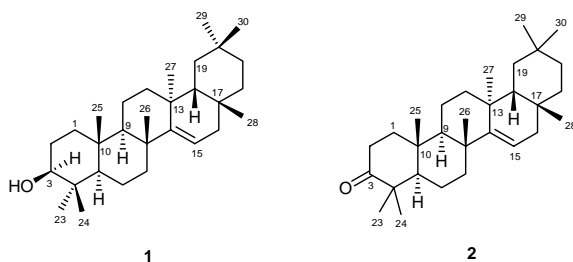
Taraxerol (**1**): Colorless crystal; <sup>1</sup>H-NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 5.52 (1H, dd, J= 8.0, 3.2 Hz, H-15), δ 3.19 (1H, dd, J= 9.2 Hz, H-3), 1.08 (3H, s, Me-8), 0.97 (3H, s, Me-10), 0.94 (3H, s, Me-20α), 0.92 (3H,

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**Correspondence to:** Choudhury Mahmood Hasan  
Tel: +88-02-9661920-73; Fax: +88-02-8615583  
E-mail: cmhasan@gmail.com

s, Me-4 $\beta$ ), 0.90 (6H, s, Me-4 $\alpha$ , Me-20 $\beta$ ), 0.82 (3H, s, Me-13), 0.80 (3H, s, Me-17). Taraxerone (**2**): White mass;  $^1\text{H-NMR}$  (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  5.55 (1H dd,  $J=8.0, 3.2$  Hz, H-15), 2.56 (m, H-2a), 2.32 (m, H-2b), 1.13 (3H, s,  $\text{CH}_3$ ), 1.08 (3H, s,  $\text{CH}_3$ ), 1.07 (3H, s,  $\text{CH}_3$ ), 1.06 (3H, s,  $\text{CH}_3$ ), 0.95 (3H, s,  $\text{CH}_3$ ), 0.91 (3H, s,  $\text{CH}_3$ ), 0.90 (3H, s,  $\text{CH}_3$ ), 0.82 (3H, s,  $\text{CH}_3$ ). Stigmasterol: Colorless needles;  $^1\text{H-NMR}$  (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ) spectral data was identical to published values.<sup>5</sup>

The  $^1\text{H-NMR}$  spectrum of compound **1** showed eight three proton singlets at  $\delta$  0.80, 0.82, 0.90, 0.90, 0.92, 0.94, 0.97, and 1.08. These were attributed to the methyl group protons at C-17, C-13, C-4 $\alpha$ , Me-4 $\beta$ , C-20 $\alpha$ , C-10, C-8 respectively. The double doublet ( $J=3.2$  Hz, 8.0 Hz) centered at  $\delta$  5.52 attributable to the olefinic proton at C-15. The broad doublet ( $J=9.2$  Hz) centered at  $\delta$  3.19 could be assigned to the oxymethine proton at C-3. The large coupling of this proton (H-3) with the vicinal methylene protons suggested a  $\beta$  (beta) orientation of the hydroxyl group at C-3. The above  $^1\text{H-NMR}$  signals suggested the presence of a typical pentacyclic triterpene skeleton. This was identified as  $\beta$ -taraxerol by comparison these data with those reported previously for taraxerol.<sup>4,6</sup>



The structure of compound **2** was elucidated by direct comparison of its spectral data with that of compound **1**. Although, the  $^1\text{H-NMR}$  spectral data of

**2** was in close agreement to that of **1**, except the resonance at  $\delta$  3.19 for the oxymethine proton at C-3 in the spectrum of **1**, was absent in **2**. This suggested that the hydroxyl group at C-3 in compound **1** was replaced by a carbonyl function. On the basis of the above spectral features, compound **2** was characterized as taraxerone, the identity of which was further substantiated by comparison of its spectroscopic data with published values.<sup>7,8</sup> The third compound was characterized as stigmasterol by comparison of its  $^1\text{H-NMR}$  spectral data with published values<sup>5</sup> as well as by co-TLC with an authentic sample.

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