

Studies on Organic Fluorine Compounds. LIV.<sup>1)</sup> Synthesis of 2,2-Difluoroarachidonic Acid

Tsutomu MORIKAWA, Tohru NISHIWAKI, Keiichi NAKAMURA, and Yoshiro KOBAYASHI\*

Tokyo College of Pharmacy, 1432-1 Horinouchi, Hachioji, Tokyo 192-03, Japan. Received August 29, 1988

**2,2-Difluoroarachidonic acid, characterized by the inductively enhanced acidity of the carboxyl group and its biological stability to  $\beta$ -oxidation, was synthesized using a fluorine-containing building block derived from ethyl bromodifluoroacetate and a carbon-chain extension reaction.**

**Keywords** 2,2-difluoroarachidonic acid; fluorine substituent; fluorine-containing building block; Reformatsky reaction; ethyl bromodifluoroacetate

The substituent effect caused by fluorine atom(s) with minimal steric disturbance contributes to the importance of fluorinated molecules in biochemistry.<sup>2)</sup> Owing to the high electronegativity of the fluorine atom, the fluorine substituent can influence the degree of chemical reactivity of a neighboring functional group. The C–F bond is strong compared to the C–H bond, enabling it to be generally biologically stable in a fluorinated molecule. These characteristic features of the fluorine substituent have prompted the synthesis of many fluorinated bioactive compounds.<sup>3)</sup> Of current interest in this field is the synthesis and biotransformation of fluorinated arachidonic acid, carried out by Fried *et al.*<sup>4)</sup> and our group.<sup>5)</sup> As an extension of our synthetic study on this series, the synthesis of 2,2-difluoroarachidonic acid (2,2-F<sub>2</sub>AA, **1a**) was conducted. 2,2-F<sub>2</sub>AA is characterized by the inductively enhanced acidity of the carboxyl group and its biological stability to  $\beta$ -oxidation.<sup>6)</sup> The present paper describes a method of the synthesis of 2,2-F<sub>2</sub>AA (**1a**) *via* Reformatsky reaction of ethyl bromodifluoroacetate (BrCF<sub>2</sub>COOEt) and a carbon-chain extension reaction.

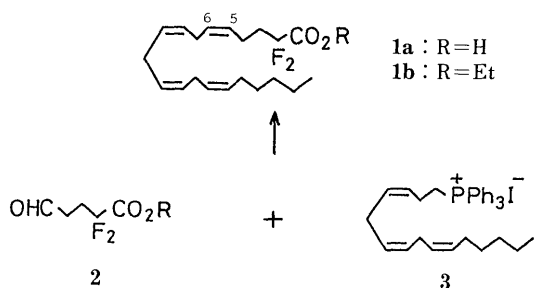


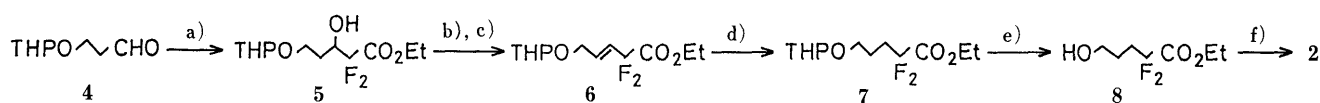
Chart 1

According to Chart 1, our approach to the construction of the 2,2-F<sub>2</sub>AA skeleton requires the production of the  $\alpha,\alpha$ -difluorocarboxylic acid derivative (**2**, C<sub>1</sub>–C<sub>5</sub> segment) as a fluorine-containing building block and the phosphonium salt (**3**, C<sub>6</sub>–C<sub>20</sub> segment) by convenient methods.

The synthetic route leading to **2** is shown in Chart 2. Monotetrahydropyranylation of propane-1,3-diol followed

by oxidation with pyridinium chlorochromate (PCC) by the usual method gave the aldehyde (**4**), which was used for preparing both the C<sub>3</sub>–C<sub>5</sub> and C<sub>6</sub>–C<sub>8</sub> segments of 2,2-F<sub>2</sub>AA. Introduction of a carboxydifluoromethyl moiety into **4** was achieved by Reformatsky reaction of BrCF<sub>2</sub>COOEt.<sup>7)</sup> Thus, the zinc-promoted reaction of BrCF<sub>2</sub>COOEt with **4** in tetrahydrofuran (THF) gave the adduct (**5**) in 57% yield. Dehydroxylation of **5** to obtain **7** was carried out by a three-step sequence: 1) activation of the hydroxyl group as its triflate by the reaction with triflic anhydride (64% yield); 2)  $\beta$ -elimination with 1,8-diazabicyclo[5.4.0]undec-7-ene (DBU) (89% yield); 3) catalytic hydrogenation with hydrogen and Pd–C catalyst (80% yield).  $\beta$ -Elimination of the hydroxyl group of **5** through the corresponding methanesulfonate was not effective due to the neighboring fluorine substitution. Catalytic hydrogenation of the allyl alcohol derivative of **6** afforded a low yield of **8** accompanied with the formation of a complex mixture. In the catalytic hydrogenation of **6**, the monofluoro ester, derived *via* partial hydrogenolysis of one C–F bond, was also isolated in 14% yield. Deprotection of the tetrahydropyranyl (THP) group of **7** followed by oxidation to the aldehyde with PCC gave the desired fluorine-containing building block, ethyl 2,2-difluoro-5-oxopentanoate (**2**, R=Et), in 62% yield.

The requisite phosphonium salt (**3**) for the chain extension of **2** was prepared as shown in Chart 3. Wittig reaction of **4** with the ylide derived from the phosphonium salt<sup>8)</sup> (**9**, *n*-BuLi, –78 °C, 1 h) afforded the *cis*-olefin (**10**) in 69% yield as a single stereoisomer. The silyl ether of **10** was deprotected with tetrabutylammonium fluoride to give an alcohol that was subsequently converted to the phosphonium salt (**12**) by the following sequence: 1) reaction with methanesulfonyl chloride and triethylamine; 2) reaction with sodium iodide; 3) reaction with triphenylphosphine. (3*Z*)-3-Nonen-1-al (**13**), the component corresponding to the C<sub>12</sub>–C<sub>20</sub> segment of 2,2-F<sub>2</sub>AA, was obtained from (4*Z*)-1,2-dihydroxy-4-decene-1,2-acetonide by a known route [1) HCl–MeOH, 2) Pb(OAc)<sub>4</sub>–CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>].<sup>9)</sup> The ylide derived from **12** [lithium diisopropylamide (LDA), –78 °C, 1 h] was treated with **13** [THF–hexamethylphosphoramide



a) BrCF<sub>2</sub>COOEt, Zn b) (CF<sub>3</sub>SO<sub>2</sub>)<sub>2</sub>O, iso-Pr<sub>2</sub>EtN c) DBU d) H<sub>2</sub>, Pd–C e) *p*-TsOH, EtOH f) PCC

Chart 2

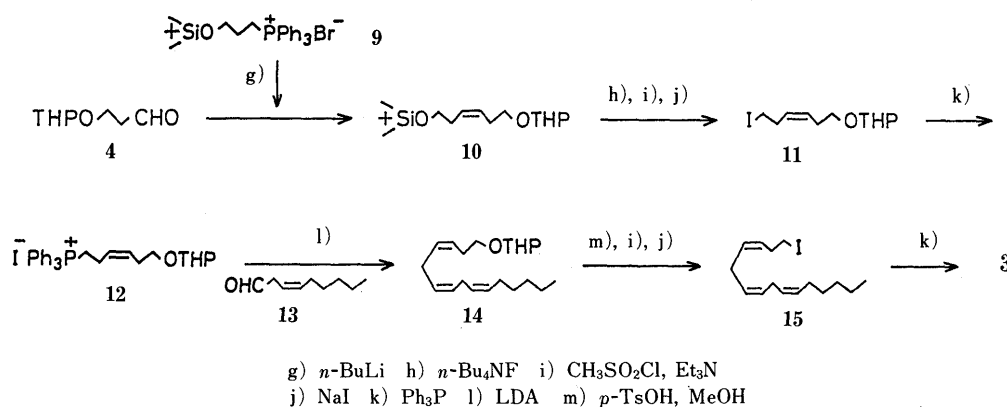


Chart 3

(HMPA),  $-78^\circ\text{C}$  for 5 min and  $0^\circ\text{C}$  for 1.5 h] to give, following an extractive work-up and filtration through a short silica gel column, the triene (**14**) in 46% yield. Although proton nuclear magnetic resonance ( $^1\text{H-NMR}$ ) analysis of this crude product showed the minor component of the olefinic isomer (about 10%), the triene thus obtained was used in the next step without further purification (*vide infra*). The transformation of **14** into the phosphonium salt (**3**) was effected by deprotection reaction and using the similar method described above [1) removal of the THP group, 2) mesylation, 3) iodination, 4) treatment with  $\text{Ph}_3\text{P}$ ]. Prior to the iodination step, the contaminating minor olefinic isomer was removed from the mixture by silica gel column chromatography to obtain the homogeneous all-*cis*-triene. The complete carbon skeleton of the tetraene was constructed by Wittig reaction of the ylide from **3** ( $\text{LDA}$ ,  $-78^\circ\text{C}$ , 45 min) with **2** under *cis*-selective olefination conditions to give the ester (**1b**) in 75% yield. Compound (**1b**) was saponified to 2,2- $\text{F}_2\text{AA}$  (**1a**) with 10 eq of 1 N potassium hydroxide in MeOH at room temperature for 30 min (78% yield).

In summary, the synthesis of 2,2- $\text{F}_2\text{AA}$  from a readily available fluorine-containing building block was achieved by a practical method. The synthetic procedure described here is applicable to the synthesis of the 2,2-difluoro analogs of other polyunsaturated fatty acids. We have already synthesized 2,2-difluorolinoleic acid and 2,2-difluorolinolenic acid in the same way.<sup>10)</sup> The enzymatic transformation of 2,2- $\text{F}_2\text{AA}$  is now being attempted.

#### Experimental

$^1\text{H-NMR}$  spectra were taken on a Bruker AM400 or a Varian EM-390 L spectrometer in  $\text{CDCl}_3$ . Chemical shifts are reported as parts per million (ppm) relative to tetramethylsilane as the internal standard.  $^{19}\text{F-NMR}$  spectra were taken on a Varian EM-360 L spectrometer in  $\text{CDCl}_3$ , and chemical shifts are reported as ppm relative to benzotrifluoride as the internal standard. Infrared spectra (IR) were recorded on a Jasco A302 infrared spectrophotometer. Mass spectra (MS) were obtained on a Hitachi M-80. All air-sensitive reactions were conducted under an argon atmosphere. Unless otherwise noted, the term "standard work-up" means the addition of ether, sequential washing with the aqueous solutions indicated in parenthesis, drying over  $\text{MgSO}_4$ , and concentration *in vacuo*. Column chromatography was carried out on silica gel (Wakogel C-200), with the solvent indicated in parenthesis as an eluent.

**Ethyl 2,2-Difluoro-3-hydroxy-5-(tetrahydropyranyloxy)pentanoate (5)** To a mixture of zinc powder (2.31 g, 35.35 mmol) and THF (30 ml) was added dropwise a solution of **4** (4 g, 25.32 mmol) and ethyl bromodifluoroacetate (5.67 g, 28.04 mmol) in THF (33 ml) at refluxing temperature, and the whole was heated under reflux for 3 h with stirring. After addition

of ether and aqueous  $\text{NH}_4\text{Cl}$  to the reaction mixture, the precipitate was removed by filtration through celite and the filtrate was extracted with ether. The extract was washed with brine, dried over  $\text{MgSO}_4$ , and purified by flash column chromatography on silica gel (Merck 9385, hexane-AcOEt, 5:1—2:1) to give **5** (4.07 g, 57% yield).  $^1\text{H-NMR}$   $\delta$ : 1.35 (3H, t,  $J=7.5$  Hz,  $\text{CH}_3$ ), 1.2—2.1 (8H, m,  $\text{CH}_2 \times 4$ ), 2.1 (1H, s, OH), 3.4—4.2 (5H, m,  $\text{OCH}_2 \times 2$  and OCH), 4.4 (2H, q,  $J=7.5$  Hz,  $\text{OCH}_2$ ), 4.7 (1H, br, OCHO).  $^{19}\text{F-NMR}$   $\delta$ :  $-50.9$  and  $-51.1$  (1F, each dd,  $J=259.4$ , 7.5 Hz),  $-61.2$  and  $-61.8$  (1F, each dd,  $J=259.4$ , 6.8 Hz). IR ( $\text{CCl}_4$ ): 3510, 2950, 2880, 1780, 1763  $\text{cm}^{-1}$ . MS  $m/z$ : 283 ( $\text{M}^+ + 1$ ).

**Ethyl 2,2-Difluoro-5-(tetrahydropyranyloxy)pentanoate (7)** A mixture of **5** (2.49 g, 8.83 mmol), *N*-ethyl-diisopropylamine (2.3 g, 17.8 mmol) and trifluoromethanesulfonic anhydride (2.74 g, 9.7 mmol) in  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  (30 ml) was stirred at  $-78^\circ\text{C}$  for 5 h. Standard work-up (cold diluted HCl, aqueous  $\text{NaHCO}_3$ , and brine) and column chromatography (hexane-AcOEt, 10:1—2:1) gave the corresponding triflate (2.328 g, 64% yield). A mixture of the triflate (1.896 g, 4.58 mmol) and DBU (837.3 mg, 5.5 mmol) in  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  (15 ml) was stirred at  $40^\circ\text{C}$  for 4 h. Standard work-up (diluted HCl, aqueous  $\text{NaHCO}_3$ , and brine) and column chromatography (hexane-AcOEt, 10:1) gave the olefinic compound (*trans*-**6**, 1.07 g, 89% yield). The hydrogenation was carried out in a low-pressure catalytic hydrogenation apparatus. Compound (**6**, 311.5 mg, 1.18 mmol), 5% Pd-C (catalytic amount), and ethanol (3 ml) were placed in a bottle, which was filled with hydrogen (3.0  $\text{kg/cm}^2$ ) and shaken for 5 h. The reaction mixture was filtered and the filtrate was concentrated *in vacuo*. The residue was purified by column chromatography (hexane-AcOEt, 30:1—20:1) to give **7** (250.2 mg, 80% yield) and the corresponding monofluoro derivative (41.2 mg, 14% yield). **7**: TLC:  $R_f$  0.325 (Merck 5715, hexane-AcOEt, 5:1).  $^1\text{H-NMR}$   $\delta$ : 1.3 (3H, t,  $J=7.5$  Hz,  $\text{CH}_3$ ), 1.2—2.5 (10H, m,  $\text{CH}_2 \times 5$ ), 3.3—4.0 (4H, m,  $\text{OCH}_2 \times 2$ ), 4.3 (2H, q,  $J=7.5$  Hz,  $\text{OCH}_2$ ), 4.6 (1H, brs, OCHO).  $^{19}\text{F-NMR}$   $\delta$ :  $-43.0$  (2F, t,  $J=17.0$  Hz). MS  $m/z$ : 265 ( $\text{M}^+ - 1$ ), 237, 181, 165, 137, 117, 101, 85. Monofluoro derivative [ethyl 2-fluoro-5-(tetrahydropyranyloxy)pentanoate]: TLC:  $R_f$  0.263 (Merck 5715, hexane-AcOEt, 5:1).  $^1\text{H-NMR}$   $\delta$ : 1.31 (3H, t,  $J=7.16$  Hz,  $\text{CH}_3$ ), 1.42—1.85 (4H, m,  $\text{CH}_2 \times 2$ ), 1.88—2.11 (4H, m,  $\text{CH}_2 \times 2$ ), 2.16—2.21 (2H, m,  $\text{CH}_2$ ), 3.44 (1H, ddd,  $J=12.4$ , 9.83, 5.95 Hz, OCH), 3.50 (1H, m, OCH), 3.78 (1H, ddd,  $J=12.4$ , 9.8, 6.45 Hz, OCH), 3.84 (1H, m, OCH), 4.26 (2H, q,  $J=7.16$  Hz,  $\text{OCH}_2$ ), 4.58 (1H, m, OCHO), 4.94 (1H, ddd,  $J=49.2$ , 7.76, 4.27 Hz, CFH).  $^{19}\text{F-NMR}$   $\delta$ :  $-129.0$  (dt,  $J=49.2$ , 24.5 Hz).

**Ethyl 2,2-Difluoro-5-oxopentanoate (2)** A mixture of **7** (486 mg, 1.83 mmol) and *p*-toluenesulfonic acid (*p*-TsOH, 53 mg, 0.28 mmol) in ethanol (5 ml) was stirred at room temperature for 4.5 h. The reaction mixture was neutralized with solid  $\text{NaHCO}_3$ , and filtered. The filtrate was concentrated *in vacuo* and the residue was purified by column chromatography (hexane-AcOEt, 5:1—3:1) to give **8** (300.1 mg, 90% yield).  $^1\text{H-NMR}$   $\delta$ : 1.35 (3H, t,  $J=7.5$  Hz,  $\text{CH}_3$ ), 1.5—2.5 (4H, m,  $\text{CH}_2 \times 2$ ), 2.35 (1H, s, OH), 3.7 (2H, t,  $J=6$  Hz,  $\text{OCH}_2$ ), 4.3 (2H, q,  $J=7.5$  Hz,  $\text{OCH}_2$ ).  $^{19}\text{F-NMR}$   $\delta$ :  $-43.3$  (2F, t,  $J=17.0$  Hz). EI-MS  $m/z$ : 165 ( $\text{M}^+ - \text{OH}$ ). CI-MS  $m/z$ : 183 ( $\text{M}^+ + 1$ ). To a mixture of PCC (152 mg, 0.71 mmol) and AcONa (17.2 mg, 0.21 mmol) in  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  (1.0 ml) was added a solution of **8** (113.5 mg, 0.62 mmol) in  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  (3 ml) at  $0^\circ\text{C}$ . After being stirred for 1.5 h at room temperature, PCC (76.0 mg, 0.35 mmol) was further added to the reaction mixture. Stirring was continued for 3 h. The reaction mixture was directly subjected to column chromatography (hexane-AcOEt, 15:1—10:1) to give **2** (77 mg, 69% yield).  $^1\text{H-NMR}$   $\delta$ : 1.36 (3H, t,  $J=7.15$  Hz,  $\text{CH}_3$ ), 2.42 (2H,

tt,  $J = 16.97$ ,  $7.46$  Hz,  $\text{CH}_2\text{CF}_2$ ),  $2.74$  (2H, t,  $J = 7.46$  Hz,  $\text{OHCCH}_2$ ),  $4.33$  (2H, q,  $J = 7.15$  Hz,  $\text{OCH}_2$ ),  $9.80$  (1H, s, CHO).

**(3Z)-1-Iodo-6-(tetrahydropyranyloxy)hex-3-ene(11)** A mixture of the phosphonium salt (**9**,  $10.27$  g,  $19.94$  mmol) and  $n\text{-BuLi}$  ( $1.21$  M solution in hexane,  $18.0$  ml,  $21.8$  mmol) in THF ( $160$  ml) was stirred for  $1$  h at  $-78^\circ\text{C}$ . To the reaction mixture was added HMPA ( $12.8$  ml) and a solution of the aldehyde (**4**,  $3$  g,  $19.0$  mmol) in THF ( $10$  ml), and the whole was stirred for  $10$  min at  $-78^\circ\text{C}$ , then for  $1$  h at  $0^\circ\text{C}$ . Standard work-up (cold diluted HCl, aqueous  $\text{NaHCO}_3$ , and brine) and column chromatography (hexane-AcOEt,  $20:1$ ) gave **10** (*cis*-selective,  $4.09$  g,  $69\%$  yield). To a solution of **10** ( $4.0$  g,  $12.74$  mmol) in THF ( $60$  ml) was added a  $n\text{-Bu}_4\text{NF}$  ( $1$  M solution in THF,  $31.9$  ml,  $31.9$  mmol) at  $0^\circ\text{C}$  and the reaction mixture was stirred at room temperature for  $2$  h. Standard work-up (brine) gave the alcohol derivative, which was used in the next reaction without purification. To a solution of the residue and triethylamine ( $1.93$  g,  $19.11$  mmol) in  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  ( $56$  ml) was added a solution of methanesulfonyl chloride ( $1.68$  g,  $14.65$  mmol) in  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  ( $6$  ml) at  $0^\circ\text{C}$  and the reaction mixture was stirred for  $1.5$  h at the same temperature. Standard work-up (cold diluted HCl, aqueous  $\text{NaHCO}_3$  and brine) and column chromatography (hexane-AcOEt,  $3:1-2:1$ ) gave the mesylate ( $3.15$  g,  $81\%$  yield).  $^1\text{H-NMR}$   $\delta$ :  $1.50-1.86$  (6H, m,  $\text{CH}_2 \times 3$ ),  $2.37$  (2H, ddd,  $J = 7.26, 6.85, 6.75$  Hz, allylic H),  $2.54$  (2H, dt,  $J = 7.31, 6.85$  Hz, allylic H),  $3.00$  (3H, s,  $\text{CH}_3$ ),  $3.42$  (1H, dt,  $J = 9.57, 6.75$  Hz,  $\text{OCH}_2$ ),  $3.76$  (1H, dt,  $J = 9.57, 6.85$  Hz,  $\text{OCH}$ ),  $3.50$  (1H, m,  $\text{OCH}$ ),  $3.86$  (1H, m,  $\text{OCH}$ ),  $4.22$  (2H, t,  $J = 6.85$  Hz,  $\text{OCH}_2$ ),  $4.58$  (1H, dd,  $J = 4.45, 2.79$  Hz,  $\text{OCHO}$ ),  $5.46$  (1H, dtt,  $J = 10.82, 7.26, 1.52$  Hz, olefinic H),  $5.63$  (1H, dtt,  $J = 10.82, 7.31, 1.45$  Hz, olefinic H). A mixture of the mesylate ( $975.9$  mg,  $3.51$  mmol) and sodium iodide ( $895$  mg,  $5.97$  mmol) in acetone ( $8$  ml) was stirred for  $11$  h at room temperature. Standard work-up (brine) and flash column chromatography on silica gel (Merck 9385, hexane-AcOEt,  $50:1$ ) gave **11** ( $871.3$  mg,  $80\%$  yield).  $^1\text{H-NMR}$   $\delta$ :  $1.43-1.86$  (6H, m,  $\text{CH}_2 \times 3$ ),  $2.35$  (2H, m, allylic H),  $2.66$  (2H, m, allylic H),  $3.15$  (2H, t,  $J = 7.28$  Hz,  $\text{CH}_2\text{I}$ ),  $3.42-3.87$  (4H, m,  $\text{OCH}_2 \times 2$ ),  $4.59$  (1H, dd,  $J = 4.39, 2.72$  Hz,  $\text{OCHO}$ ),  $5.43$  (1H, dtt,  $J = 10.79, 7.18, 1.51$  Hz, olefinic H),  $5.58$  (1H, dtt,  $J = 10.79, 7.30, 1.33$  Hz, olefinic H). MS  $m/z$ :  $311$  ( $\text{M}^+ + 1$ ),  $209$ ,  $208$ ,  $183$ ,  $155$ ,  $101$ ,  $85$ .

**Phosphonium Salt (12)** A mixture of **11** ( $119$  mg,  $0.38$  mmol) and triphenylphosphine ( $120.8$  mg,  $0.46$  mmol) in  $\text{CH}_3\text{CN}$  ( $3$  ml) was refluxed for  $13$  h. After the removal of the solvent, the residue was washed with ether several times and dried over  $\text{P}_2\text{O}_5$  *in vacuo* to give **12** (quantitative yield).  $^1\text{H-NMR}$   $\delta$ :  $1.34-1.72$  (6H, m,  $\text{CH}_2 \times 3$ ),  $2.15$  (2H, m, allylic H),  $2.47$  (2H, m, allylic H),  $3.34-3.87$  (6H, m,  $\text{OCH}_2 \times 2$  and  $\text{PCH}_2$ ),  $4.49$  (1H, dd,  $J = 5.31, 2.65$  Hz,  $\text{OCHO}$ ),  $5.46-5.51$  (1H, m, olefinic H),  $5.68-5.74$  (1H, m, olefinic H),  $7.71-7.86$  (15H, m, aromatic H).

**(3Z,6Z,9Z)-1-(Tetrahydropyranyloxy)pentadeca-3,6,9-triene (14)** A mixture of the phosphonium salt (**12**,  $4.1$  g,  $7.18$  mmol) and LDA ( $8.88$  mmol) in THF ( $37$  ml) was stirred for  $1$  h at  $-78^\circ\text{C}$ . To the reaction mixture was added HMPA ( $4.3$  ml) and a solution of (3Z)-3-nonen-1-ol (**13**,  $1.11$  g,  $7.96$  mmol) in THF ( $17$  ml), and the whole was stirred for  $5$  min at  $-78^\circ\text{C}$ , then for  $1.5$  h at  $0^\circ\text{C}$ . Standard work-up (brine) and filtration of the crude product through a short silica gel column (hexane-AcOEt,  $30:1-20:1$ ) gave a mixture of the triene (**14**) and the olefinic isomer (*ca.*  $9:1$  by  $^1\text{H-NMR}$ ,  $1.00$  g,  $46\%$  total yield). **14**:  $^1\text{H-NMR}$   $\delta$ :  $0.89$  (3H, t,  $J = 7.02$  Hz,  $\text{CH}_3$ ),  $1.25-1.87$  (12H, m,  $\text{CH}_2 \times 6$ ),  $2.05$  (2H, dt,  $J = 6.97, 6.97$  Hz, allylic H),  $2.39$  (2H, m, allylic H),  $2.83$  (4H, m, allylic H),  $3.39-3.90$  (4H, m,  $\text{OCH}_2 \times 2$ ),  $4.60$  (1H, dd,  $J = 4.01, 2.90$  Hz,  $\text{OCHO}$ ),  $5.30-5.51$  (6H, m, olefinic H). MS  $m/z$ :  $220$  ( $\text{M}^+ - \text{THP-H}$ ),  $183$ ,  $85$ .

**(3Z,6Z,9Z)-1-Iodopentadeca-3,6,9-triene (15)** A mixture of **14** ( $1.0$  g,  $3.27$  mmol) and  $p\text{-TsOH}$  ( $31.2$  mg,  $0.16$  mmol) in methanol ( $10$  ml) was stirred at room temperature for  $5$  h. The reaction mixture was neutralized with solid  $\text{NaHCO}_3$ , and filtered. The filtrate was concentrated *in vacuo* and the residue was purified by column chromatography (hexane-AcOEt,  $7:1-5:1$ ) to give the alcohol derivative ( $550$  mg,  $76\%$  yield). In the same procedure described for the synthesis of **11**,  $550$  mg of the alcohol derivative was used. The yield of the mesylate was  $661$  mg ( $89\%$ ).  $^1\text{H-NMR}$   $\delta$ :  $0.89$  (3H, t,  $J = 6.89$  Hz,  $\text{CH}_3$ ),  $1.29-1.36$  (6H, m,  $\text{CH}_2 \times 3$ ),  $2.06$  (2H, m, allylic H),  $2.54$  (2H, m, allylic H),  $2.82$  (4H, m, allylic H),  $3.00$  (3H, s,  $\text{CH}_3$ ),  $4.23$  (2H, t,  $J = 6.80$  Hz,  $\text{OCH}_2$ ),  $5.31-5.43$  (5H, m, olefinic H),

$5.57$  (1H, dtt,  $J = 10.71, 7.35, 1.49$  Hz, olefinic H). The yield of the iodide (**15**) was  $479.8$  mg ( $66\%$ ).  $^1\text{H-NMR}$   $\delta$ :  $0.89$  (3H, t,  $J = 6.88$  Hz,  $\text{CH}_3$ ),  $1.26-1.40$  (6H, m,  $\text{CH}_2 \times 3$ ),  $2.06$  (2H, m, allylic H),  $2.67$  (2H, m, allylic H),  $2.81$  (4H, m, allylic H),  $3.15$  (2H, t,  $J = 7.25$  Hz,  $\text{CH}_2\text{I}$ ),  $5.30-5.44$  (5H, m, olefinic H),  $5.53$  (1H, dtt,  $J = 10.67, 7.34, 1.40$  Hz, olefinic H). MS  $m/z$ :  $332$  ( $\text{M}^+$ ),  $234$ ,  $205$ ,  $150$ ,  $79$ . High-resolution MS  $m/z$ : Calcd for  $\text{C}_{15}\text{H}_{25}\text{I}$ :  $332.1000$ . Found:  $332.0996$ .

**Phosphonium Salt (3)** In the same procedure described for the synthesis of **12**, the iodide (**15**,  $479$  mg,  $1.44$  mmol) was reacted with triphenylphosphine ( $417.3$  mg,  $1.59$  mmol) in  $\text{CH}_3\text{CN}$  ( $5$  ml) for  $24$  h to give the phosphonium salt (**3**) in quantitative yield.  $^1\text{H-NMR}$   $\delta$ :  $0.88$  (3H, t,  $J = 6.92$  Hz,  $\text{CH}_3$ ),  $1.21-1.37$  (6H, m,  $\text{CH}_2 \times 3$ ),  $1.99$  (2H, dt,  $J = 6.99, 6.92$  Hz, allylic H),  $2.45-2.53$  (2H, m, allylic H),  $2.59$  (2H, dd,  $J = 7.24, 7.24$  Hz, allylic H),  $2.64$  (2H, dd,  $J = 7.21, 7.21$  Hz, allylic H),  $3.86$  (2H, dt,  $J = 11.90, 8.01$  Hz,  $\text{PCH}_2$ ),  $5.17-5.44$  (5H, m, olefinic H),  $5.64$  (1H, dt,  $J = 10.6, 7.04$  Hz, olefinic H),  $7.69-7.89$  (15H, m, aromatic H).

**2,2-Difluoroarachidonic Acid Ethyl Ester (1b)** A mixture of the phosphonium salt (**3**,  $198.6$  mg,  $0.33$  mmol) and LDA ( $0.32$  mmol) in THF ( $1.9$  ml) was stirred for  $45$  min at  $-78^\circ\text{C}$ . To the reaction mixture was added HMPA ( $0.38$  ml) and a solution of the aldehyde (**2**,  $67$  mg,  $0.37$  mmol) in THF ( $2.5$  ml), and the whole was stirred for  $5$  min at  $-78^\circ\text{C}$ , then for  $1$  h at  $0^\circ\text{C}$ . Standard work-up (brine) and column chromatography (hexane-AcOEt,  $60:1$ ) gave the ester (**1b**,  $91.0$  mg,  $75\%$  yield).  $^1\text{H-NMR}$   $\delta$ :  $0.89$  (3H, t,  $J = 6.91$  Hz,  $\text{CH}_3$ ),  $1.27-1.38$  (6H, m,  $\text{CH}_2 \times 3$ ),  $1.35$  (3H, t,  $J = 7.14$  Hz,  $\text{CH}_3$ ),  $2.03-2.30$  (6H, m, allylic H and  $\text{CH}_2\text{CF}_2$ ),  $2.80-2.85$  (6H, m, allylic H),  $4.32$  (2H, q,  $J = 7.14$  Hz,  $\text{OCH}_2$ ),  $5.30-5.47$  (8H, m, olefinic H).  $^{19}\text{F-NMR}$   $\delta$ :  $-43.5$  (2F, t,  $J = 16.9$  Hz). IR ( $\text{CCl}_4$ ):  $3020, 2960, 2940, 2860, 1775, 1760\text{ cm}^{-1}$ . MS  $m/z$ :  $368$  ( $\text{M}^+$ ). High-resolution MS  $m/z$ : Calcd for  $\text{C}_{22}\text{H}_{34}\text{F}_2\text{O}_2$ :  $368.2524$ . Found:  $368.2511$ .

**2,2-Difluoroarachidonic Acid (1a)** A mixture of the ester (**1b**,  $20$  mg,  $0.054$  mmol) and  $1\text{ N KOH}$  in MeOH ( $0.54$  ml,  $0.54$  mmol) was stirred for  $30$  min at room temperature. Standard work-up ( $5\%$  HCl and brine) and column chromatography ( $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2\text{-Et}_2\text{O}$ ,  $2:1$ ) gave the acid as a yellow oil (**1a**,  $14.2$  mg,  $78\%$  yield).  $^1\text{H-NMR}$   $\delta$ :  $0.89$  (3H, t,  $J = 6.89$  Hz,  $\text{CH}_3$ ),  $1.26-1.40$  (6H, m,  $\text{CH}_2 \times 3$ ),  $1.95-2.40$  (6H, m, allylic H and  $\text{CH}_2\text{CF}_2$ ),  $2.83$  (6H, m, allylic H),  $5.31-5.48$  (8H, m, olefinic H),  $6.58$  (1H, br,  $\text{COOH}$ ). IR ( $\text{CCl}_4$ ):  $3020, 2960, 2940, 2860, 1755\text{ cm}^{-1}$ . MS  $m/z$ :  $340$  ( $\text{M}^+$ ). High-resolution MS  $m/z$ : Calcd for  $\text{C}_{20}\text{H}_{30}\text{F}_2\text{O}_2$ :  $340.2211$ . Found:  $340.2193$ .

## References and Notes

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