

ANOTHER TWO NOVEL CERAMIDES FROM *Zephyranthes candida*

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From the the bulbs of *Zephyranthes candida* (Amaryllidaceae), another two novel ceramides have been isolated and identified. The structures of the two novel compounds were established as (2S,3S,4R,21E,2'R)-2-[N-(2'-hydroxynonadecanoyl)-N-(1'',2''-dihydroxyethyl)amino]-21-hexacosene-1,3,4-triol, named zephyranamide C (**1**), and 1,3,4,5,6-pentahydroxy-2-(2'-hydroxyhexacosanoyl-amino)-18-(E)-tetracosene, named zephyranamide D (**2**). Their structures and stereochemistries were elucidated by spectral techniques including ¹H NMR, ¹³C NMR, as well as HSQC, HMBC, DEPT, and COSY.

Keywords: *Zephyranthes candida*, Amaryllidaceae, ceramide, zephyranamide C, zephyranamide D.

Zephyranthes candida (Amaryllidaceae), a member of the genus *Zephyranthes*, is widely distributed in the temperate zone of Western Hemisphere and is also used as an ornamental and medicinal plant in China. Plants of the genus *Zephyranthes* comprise about 60 species, which were reported to be rich sources of Amaryllidaceae alkaloids [1–3]. Previous chemical investigations of *Z. candida* led to the isolation of a flavonoid glycoside, kaempferol-3-*O*-rhamnoglucoside [4], five alkaloids, lycorine, zephyranthine, tazettine, nerinine, and haemanthidine [5], and a cytostatic alkaloid, *trans*-dihydronarciclasine [6].

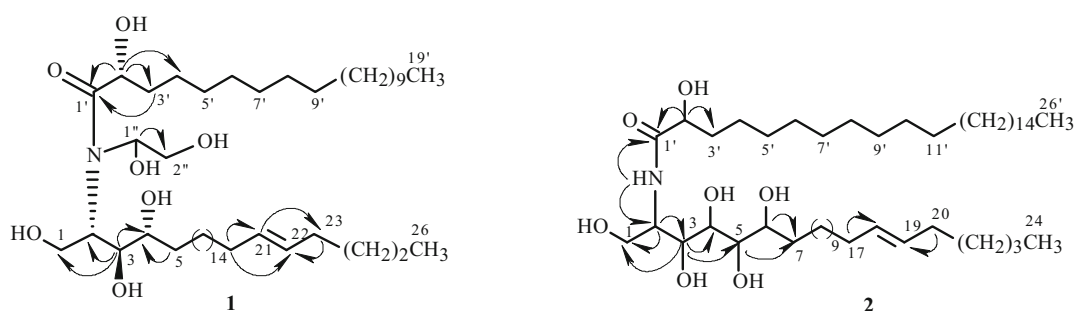
In previous papers, we reported the structure elucidation of two new ceramides, zephyranamide A and zephyranamide B [7], and two rarely reported ceramides, candidamide A and candidamide B from this plant [8]. Our continuing phytochemical investigation on the constituents of this plant has resulted in the isolation of another two novel ceramides named zephyranamide C (**1**) and zephyranamide D (**2**). In the present study, we describe the characterization of zephyranamide C (**1**) and zephyranamide D (**2**), which belong to the rarely occurring class of ceramides.

Compound **1** was obtained as a white amorphous powder, [α]_D²⁵ –97.4° (*c* 0.073, pyridine). Elemental analysis agrees with the molecular formula C₄₇H₉₃NO₇. This molecular formula was confirmed by positive ESI-MS at *m/z* 818 [M – H + 2H₂O]⁺, 733 [M – H – CH₂OH – H₂O]⁺, and 806 [M + Na]⁺. The IR spectrum showed absorption bands at 3345 and 2920, 2850 and 1635, 1530 and 1470, and 718 cm^{–1} indicating the presence of hydroxyl, amide carbonyl functions, and olefinic carbons, respectively, and the ¹H and ¹³C NMR spectra of **1** also indicated the presence of hydroxyl, amide groups, and two aliphatic long chains (Table 1). All this suggested that compound **1** has a ceramide nature [9]. The position and geometry of the double bond were confirmed by ¹H–¹H COSY analysis, ESI-MS fragment analysis, and ¹³C NMR data of the carbon next to the double bond.

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TABLE 1. ^1H NMR (500 MHz), ^{13}C NMR (125 MHz), and COSY Spectral Data of Compound **1** ($\text{C}_5\text{D}_5\text{N}$, δ , ppm, J/Hz)

C atom	δ_{H} (HSQC)	δ_{C} (DEPT)	^1H - ^1H COSY
1a	4.41 (dd, J = 11.0, 5.3)	61.9 (CH_2)	H-2
1b	4.46 (dd, J = 11.0, 5.3)	61.9	
2	5.12 (m)	53.1 (CH)	H-1, H-3, NH
3	4.32 (dd, J = 6.2, 4.7)	76.8 (CH)	H-2, H-4
4	4.52 (m)	73.7 (CH)	H-3, H-5
5a, 5b	1.97 (m), 2.05 (m)	33.0 (CH_2)	H-4, H-6
6	1.63 (m)	26.6 (CH_2)	H-5, H-7
7	1.92 (m)	33.9 (CH_2)	H-6, H-8
8	1.25 (m)	30.4 (CH_2)	H-7, H-9
9	1.25 (m)	29.5 (CH_2)	H-8, H-10
10–18	1.25–1.38 (br.s)	29.5–30.4 (CH_2)	
19	1.63 (m)	26.6 (CH_2)	H-18, H-20
20	1.92 (m)	33.9 (CH_2)	H-19, H-21
21	5.55 (dt, J = 15.3, 9.2)	130.8 (CH)	H-20, H-22
22	5.50 (dt, J = 15.3, 9.2)	130.7 (CH)	H-21, H-23
23	2.20 (m)	33.3 (CH_2)	H-22, H-24
24	1.25 (m)	32.1 (CH_2)	
25	1.25 (br.s)	23.0 (CH_2)	
26	0.86 (t, J = 6.8)	14.3 (CH_3)	
1'	–	174.0 (C)	
2'	4.73 (dd, J = 7.8, 4.1)	76.3 (CH)	H-3'
3'a, 3'b	2.28 (m), 1.92 (m)	34.3 (CH_2)	H-2', H-4'
4'	2.04 (m)	26.7 (CH_2)	H-3', H-(5'–16')
5'–16'	1.24–1.34 (br.s)	29.5–30.4 (CH_2)	
17'	1.24 (m)	32.1 (CH_2)	
18'	1.24 (m)	23.0 (CH_2)	
19'	0.86 (t, J = 6.7)	14.3 (CH_3)	
1''	4.28 (m)	73.0 (CH)	H-2''
2''a	4.28 (dd, J = 11.2, 5.3)	72.9 (CH_2)	
2''b	4.27 (dd, J = 11.2, 5.0)	72.9	

Fig. 1. Structures and key HMBC correlations ($\text{H} \rightarrow \text{C}$) of **1** and **2**.

The ^{13}C NMR (Table 1) and DEPT spectral data of compound **1** showed one quaternary carbon at δ_{C} 174.0 (C-1'), six carbon atom signals bearing hydroxyl groups (δ_{C} 61.9, 76.8, 73.7, 76.3, 73.0 and 72.9) and one double bond (δ_{C} 130.8, 130.7), as well as aliphatic methylenes between δ_{C} 29.5–30.4, and two terminal methyls at δ_{C} 14.3 (C-26 and C-19'). The signal at δ_{H} 5.12 (H-2) showed a cross-peak with the signals at δ_{H} 4.41, 4.46 (H-1) and 4.32 (H-3) in the ^1H - ^1H COSY spectrum of **1**, and the latter correlated with the signal at δ_{H} 4.52 (H-4). The correlations were also observed in ^1H - ^1H COSY spectrum between δ_{H} 4.28, 4.27 (H-2'') and 4.28 (H-1''), δ_{H} 2.28, 1.92 (H-3') and 4.73 (H-2'), δ_{H} 2.05, 1.97 (H-5) and 4.52 (H-4), δ_{H} 1.63 (H-6) and 2.05, 1.97 (H-5), and δ_{H} 1.92 (H-7) and 1.63 (H-6). The structure of **1** was further illustrated by combined analysis of HSQC and HMBC spectra (Fig. 1). In the ^1H NMR spectrum of compound **1**, however, there were no signals between the δ_{H} 8–9, which indicated a tertiary amide may be present [10].

TABLE 2. ^1H NMR (500 MHz), ^{13}C NMR (125 MHz), and COSY Spectral Data of Compound **2** ($\text{C}_5\text{D}_5\text{N}$, δ , ppm, J/Hz)

C atom	δ_{H} (HSQC)	δ_{C} (DEPT)	^1H - ^1H COSY
1a	4.42 (dd, J = 10.8, 4.4)	62.1 (CH_2)	H-2
1b	4.50 (dd, J = 10.6, 4.9)	62.1	
2	5.09 (m)	53.0 (CH)	H-1, H-3, NH
3	4.33 (dd, J = 5.2, 3.7)	76.9 (CH)	H-2, H-4
4	4.25 (m)	76.8 (CH)	H-3, H-5
5	4.27 (m)	73.0 (CH)	H-4, H-6
6	4.27 (m)	72.9 (CH)	H-5, H-7
7a, 7b	1.92 (m), 2.25 (m)	34.2 (CH_2)	H-6, H-8
8	1.92 (m)	29.5 (CH_2)	H-7, H-9
9–16	1.25–1.38 (br.s)	29.5–30.3 (CH_2)	
17	2.15 (m)	33.8 (CH_2)	H-16, H-18
18	5.56 (dt, J = 15.1, 6.1)	130.8 (CH)	H-17, H-19
19	5.50 (dt, J = 15.3, 5.9)	130.7 (CH)	H-18, H-20
20	1.98 (m)	33.3 (CH_2)	H-19, H-21
21	1.91 (m)	32.9 (CH_2)	H-20, H-22
22	1.25 (m)	32.1 (CH_2)	
23	1.25 (br.s)	22.9 (CH_2)	
24	0.86 (t, J = 6.5)	14.2 (CH_3)	
NH	8.55 (d, J = 8.9)	–	H-2
1'	–	175.2 (C)	
2'	4.60 (m)	72.5 (CH)	H-3'
3'a, 3'b	2.21 (m), 2.02 (m)	35.7 (CH_2)	H-2', H-4'
4'	1.78 (m)	26.6 (CH_2)	H-3', H-5'
5'	1.71 (m)	25.8 (CH_2)	H-4', H-(6'–24')
6'–24'	1.25–1.38 (br.s)	29.5–30.3 (CH_2)	
25'	1.25 (br.s)	22.9 (CH_2)	
26'	0.86 (t, J = 6.5)	14.2 (CH_3)	H-(6'–24')

Furthermore, the lengths of the long-chain base (LCB) and the fatty acid (FA), together with the presence of 2-amino and 1,2',3,4-tetrahydroxyl groups, as well as the C-21 and C-22 double bonds, were established by ESI-MS fragment pattern analysis (Fig. 2). The investigation of the ESI-MS showed two important fragmentations at m/z 636 [$\text{M} - 5\text{H}_2\text{O} - \text{C}_4\text{H}_9$] $^+$ and 399 [$\text{M} - \text{FA} - \text{CH}_2\text{OH} - \text{C}_4\text{H}_9$] $^+$, suggesting the C=C bond to be located at C-21 and C-22. Additionally, the fragments at m/z 437 [$\text{M} - \text{FA} - \text{CH}_2\text{OH} - \text{H}_2\text{O}$] $^+$ and 372 [$\text{M} - \text{LCB}$] $^+$ suggested compound **1** was a tertiary amide. Fragments at m/z 636, 437, 399, 372, 336, and 297 were the six significant ions of compound **1**, predicting 26 and 19 carbons in the LCB and FA, respectively, and that the double bond must be located in the LCB (Fig. 2). Moreover, the C-21, C-22 double bond was assigned on the basis of the typical fragment ions at m/z 705 [$\text{M} - 2\text{H}_2\text{O} - \text{C}_3\text{H}_6$] $^+$ and 697 [$\text{M} - \text{H}_2\text{O} - \text{C}_3\text{H}_6 - \text{C}_2\text{H}_2$] $^+$, which was formed by elimination of propene through a McLafferty rearrangement [11]. The 21,22 alkenyl bond should be *trans* on the basis of the coupling constant of H-21 and H-22 (15.3 Hz) and the chemical shifts of C-20 and C-23 (δ_{C} 33.9 and 33.3) [12].

Regarding the stereochemistry, the formulated relative configuration of compound **1** was based on the carbon chemical shifts at δ_{C} 61.9 (C-1), 53.1 (C-2), 76.8 (C-3), 73.7 (C-4), 174.0 (C-1'), and 76.3 (C-2'), which happened to be fairly close to those previously reported for (2*S*, 3*S*, 4*R*, 2'*R*) sphingosine moieties [13, 14]. Including biogenetic considerations, the structure of compound **1** was therefore concluded to be (2*S*, 3*S*, 4*R*, 21*E*, 2'*R*)-2-[*N*-(2'-hydroxynonadecanoyl)-*N*-(1'', 2''-dihydroxyethyl)amino]-21-hexacosene-1,3,4-triol, and we have named compound **1** zephyranamide C.

Compound **2** was also obtained as a white amorphous powder, [α] $_{\text{D}}^{25}$ 0° (*c* 0.09, pyridine). Elemental analysis agrees with the molecular $\text{C}_{50}\text{H}_{99}\text{NO}_7$, mp 146–147°C. This molecular formula was again analyzed by positive ESI-MS at m/z 718 [$\text{M} + \text{H} - 6\text{H}_2\text{O}$] $^+$ and 848 [$\text{M} + \text{Na}$] $^+$. The IR absorption bands data at 3330, 2920, 1620, 1465, and 720 cm^{-1} indicated the presence of hydroxyls, amide groups, and long aliphatic chains, respectively.

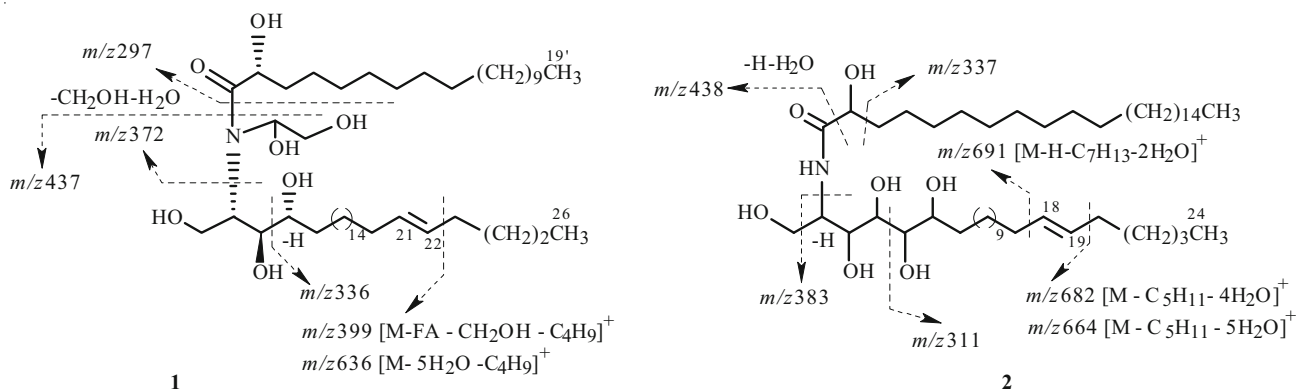


Fig. 2. ESI-MS fragment analysis of compounds **1** and **2**.

The structure of **2** was deduced by combined analysis of DEPT, HSQC, and HMBC spectra. The NMR spectra of **2** (Table 2) showed an amide NH signal (1H, δ_{H} 8.55, d, $J = 8.9$ Hz), a carbonyl (δ_{C} 175.2, C-1') and a group of proton signals (δ_{H} 1.25–1.38, br.s), and two terminal methyls (6H, δ_{H} 0.86, t, $J = 6.5$), which indicated that **2** might belong to the ceramide class; in addition, another signal at low field was observed at δ_{H} 5.09 (1H, m) for a methine proton vicinal to the nitrogen atom of an amide linkage, and the data indicated a phytosphingolipid structure [15]. In the ^1H NMR spectrum of **2** (Table 2), signals of a *trans*-olefinic bond at δ_{H} 5.56 (1H, dt, $J = 15.1, 6.1$ Hz) and 5.50 (1H, dt, $J = 15.3, 5.9$ Hz) and seven characteristic signals of geminal carbon protons to hydroxyl groups were also observed at δ_{H} 4.60 (1H, m), 4.50 (1H, dd, $J = 10.6, 4.9$ Hz), 4.42 (1H, dd, $J = 10.8, 4.4$ Hz), 4.33 (1H, dd, $J = 5.2, 3.7$ Hz), 4.25 (1H, m), 4.27 (1H, m), and 4.27 (1H, m). The ^{13}C NMR spectral data of **2** (Table 2) showed one quaternary carbon at δ_{C} 175.2 (CONH), two olefinic methine carbon atoms at δ_{C} 130.8 and 130.7 (C=C), as well as six methines at δ_{C} 53.0 (CHNH), 76.9 (CHOH), 76.8 (CHOH), 73.0 (CHOH), 72.9 (CHOH), and 72.5 (CHOH) and one methylene at δ_{C} 62.1 (CH₂OH). The C-18, C-19 alkenyl bond was found to be *trans*, as evidenced by the *E*-geometry of the double bond in the unsaturated LCB determined according to the ^{13}C NMR chemical shifts of C-17 (δ_{C} 33.8) and C-20 (δ_{C} 33.3) of the methylene carbon next to the olefinic carbon, which usually appears at $\delta \approx 27$ in the (*Z*) isomers and at $\delta \approx 33$ in the (*E*) isomers [16], and the coupling constant of H-18 and H-19 was 15.1 Hz. All these spectral data indicated that compound **2** possessed two aliphatic long chains containing one double bond and six hydroxyl groups, and suggested that it was a phytosphingosine type ceramide.

The structural elucidation and assignments of complete proton and carbon signals were achieved by 2D NMR (HSQC, HMBC, and ^1H - ^1H COSY) techniques and chemical methods. The ^1H - ^1H COSY spectrum of **2** showed a pair of double doublets of oxygenated methylene at δ_{H} 4.50 (1H, dd, $J = 10.6, 4.9$ Hz) and 4.42 (1H, dd, $J = 10.8, 4.4$ Hz) coupled to the nitrogen-bearing methine signal at δ_{H} 5.09 (1H, m), which was coupled further to the signal at δ_{H} 4.33 (1H, dd, $J = 5.2, 3.7$). Olefinic protons at δ_{H} 5.56 (1H, dt, $J = 15.1, 6.1$ Hz) and 5.50 (1H, dt, $J = 15.3, 5.9$ Hz) showed coupling with methylene protons resonating at δ_{H} 2.15 (1H, m) and 1.98 (1H, m). In the HMBC spectrum of **2**, the proton at δ_{H} 5.09 (H-2) showed correlation with oxygenated methylene (δ_{C} 62.1) and oxygenated methines (δ_{C} 76.9); the signal at δ_{H} 4.60 (H-2') correlated with the quaternary carbon and methylene carbon resonating at δ_{C} 175.2 (C-1') and 35.7 (C-3'), respectively.

According to the analysis of positively charged ESI-MS of **2**, the number of carbons in the LCB and the FA were determined to be 24 and 26, respectively. The positively charged ESI-MS of **2** showed significant fragments at m/z 682 [$\text{M} - \text{C}_5\text{H}_{11} - 4\text{H}_2\text{O}$] $^+$, 664 [$\text{M} - \text{C}_5\text{H}_{11} - 5\text{H}_2\text{O}$] $^+$, and 691 [$\text{M} - 1 - \text{C}_7\text{H}_{13} - 2\text{H}_2\text{O}$] $^+$, suggesting the double bond to be located at C-18 and C-19 (Fig. 2). This was confirmed on the basis of the typical fragment ions at m/z 746 [$\text{M} - \text{H} - \text{C}_3\text{H}_6 - 2\text{H}_2\text{O}$] $^+$ and 772 [$\text{M} - \text{H} - \text{C}_3\text{H}_6 - \text{C}_2\text{H}_2 - 2\text{H}_2\text{O}$] $^+$ in the positively charged ESI-MS, which were formed by elimination of propene through a McLafferty rearrangement [17, 18].

Based on the above information and compared with the literature [19], the structure of compound **2** was assigned as 1,3,4,5,6-pentahydroxy-2-(2'-hydroxyhexacosanoyl amino)-18-(*E*)-tetracosene, and designated zephyranamide D.

EXPERIMENTAL

General Methods. ^1H NMR and ^{13}C NMR, COSY, HSQC, and HMBC spectra: Bruker spectrometers operating at 500 MHz; ESI-MS: Agilent 1100 LC/MSD SL; IR spectra: IMPACT 400 (KBr); JASCO P-1020 optical rotation apparatus; Melting points: SGW X-4 micromelting point apparatus.

Plant Material. The bulbs of *Zephyranthes candida* were collected from Nanjing Agricultural University, Jiangsu province, People's Republic of China, in August, 2006. A voucher specimen (No. 61018/JSB) documenting the collection was authenticated at the Herbarium by Prof. Yun-fa Dong, phytochemist, Institute of Botany (Nanjing Botanical Garden Mem. Sun Yat-Sen), Jiangsu province and the Chinese Academy of Sciences, where it was deposited.

Extraction and Purification. The air-dried and powdered bulbs (ground parts cut off) of *Zephyranthes candida* (3.5 kg) were extracted three times with 95% EtOH (10 L $\times$ 3) at room temperature for one week. The aqueous ethanol phase was evaporated under reduced pressure and the initial residue dried in *vacuo*. The resulting residue was dissolved in H₂O and re-extracted with petroleum ether, CHCl₃ (3 $\times$), and then CHCl₃–MeOH (3:2, v/v). The extract portions of CHCl₃ and CHCl₃–MeOH (3:2) were combined and evaporated, and the crude residue (105 g) was subjected to silica gel column chromatography eluting with CHCl₃–MeOH (99:1, 97:3, 95:5, 9:1, 8:2, 7:3, 6:4, and 1:1, v/v, 800 mL each) to yield six fractions (Fr. 1 to 6). Fraction 3 (22.0 g) was then chromatographed on silica gel eluting with petroleum ether–EtOAc (100:0, 9:1, 8:2, 7:3, v/v, 250 mL each) to furnish four subfractions (Fr. 3-1 to Fr. 3-4). Fraction 3-2 (7.8 g) was further separated by CC using CHCl₃–MeOH with gradient polarity as eluent (8:1, 7:1, 6:1, v/v, 250 mL each) and then purified by Sephadex LH-20 eluted with CHCl₃–MeOH (1:1, v/v, 180 mL each) to afford compound **1** (30.0 mg) and **2** (25.0 mg).

Zephyranamide C (1), white amorphous powder, mp 150–151°C (CHCl₃–MeOH), $[\alpha]_D^{25}$ -7.4° (c 0.073, pyridine). IR (KBr, $\nu_{\max}$, cm⁻¹): 3345, 2920, 2850, 1635, 1560, 1530, 1470, 1070, 960 and 718; ESI-MS: m/z 806 [M + Na]⁺.

Zephyranamide D (2), white amorphous powder, mp 146–147°C (CHCl₃–MeOH), $[\alpha]_D^{25}$ 0° (c 0.09, pyridine). IR (KBr, $\nu_{\max}$, cm⁻¹): 3330, 3220, 2920, 2850, 1620, 1540, 1465, 1370, 1270, 1070, 1065, 1020, 960, 870 and 720; ESI-MS: m/z 848 [M + Na]⁺.

For ¹H NMR, ¹³C NMR, HSQC, HMBC, and COSY spectral data of **1** and **2**, see Tables 1 and 2 and Fig. 1.

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