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Parallel Synthesis of a Multi-Substituted Benzo[b]furan Library

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Abstract

The solution phase parallel synthesis of a 121 member library of multi-substituted benzo[b] furans is described. 2,3,5-Trisubstituted benzo[b] furans have been prepared by the palladium-catalyzed substitution of 3-iodobenzofurans by Suzuki-Miyaura, carbonylative Suzuki, Sonogashira, Heck, and carboalkoxylation chemistry. The 3-iodobenzofurans are readily prepared in good to excellent yields by the palladium/copper-catalyzed cross-coupling of various o-iodoanisoles and terminal alkynes, followed by electrophilic cyclization with IC1.

Introduction

Benzo[b]furan derivatives are of considerable interest because of their widespread occurrence among natural products and their physiological properties. ¹⁻⁶ For instance, 2,3-disubstituted benzo[b]furans and derivatives exhibit a broad range of biological activities. A small selection of biologically and pharmacologically active benzo[b]furan compounds is shown in Figure 1. Adenosine antagonist XH-14 (1) was isolated from the plant *Salvia miltiorrhiza*, which has been widely used in China for the treatment of coronary heart diseases, such as myocardial infarction and angina pectoris. ⁷⁻⁹ Obovaten (2) is known as a very important antitumor agent. ^{10,11} The methyl ester 3 was isolated from exudates released by the roots of iron-deficient alfalfa (*Medicago sativa*). ^{12,13} 2-Aryl-3-aroylbenzo[b]furans serve as core structures of many naturally occurring products and pharmaceutical drug candidates. ^{14,15} Recently, Flynn *et al.* prepared 2,3-disubstituted benzo[b]furan analogues (4) of some benzo[b]thiophenes identified as inhibitors of tubulin polymerization and their biological activity was assessed. ^{16–18} Furopyridine derivatives are also highly biologically active. ^{19–22}

For these reasons, various routes to substituted benzo[b] furans have been the subject of extensive experimental studies. Major synthetic strategies for the construction of furan rings from various arene derivatives, 23,24 alkyne-based palladium-catalyzed reactions, $^{25-34}$ and C-O bond formation 35,36 have been reported. Recently, we developed a general synthesis of 2,3-disubstituted benzo[b] furans by the palladium/copper-catalyzed cross-coupling of various o-iodoanisoles and terminal alkynes, followed by electrophilic cyclization with I_2 , PhSeCl or p-O₂NC₆H₄SC1 under very mild reaction conditions (Scheme 1). 37

In our continuing research efforts to adapt heterocyclization chemistry to a high-throughput synthesis format, we herein report the first solution phase library synthesis of benzofurans by our electrophilic cyclization chemistry. We demonstrate the significance of this methodology by elaborating the resulting 3-iodobenzofurans via various palladium-catalyzed couplings, such as Suzuki-Miyaura, carbonylative Suzuki, Sonogashira, Heck, and carboalkoxylation

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chemistry, to a 121 member library of 2,3,5-trisubstituted benzo[b]furans **14** (see Scheme 4) in modest yields.

Results and Discussion

The strategy for library production is shown in Scheme 2. We hypothesized that our previously described iodocyclization process should readily afford 2,3,5-trisubstituted benzo[b]furans 14 as key intermediates to compounds of biological interest. Also, numerous analogues of 14 should be readily prepared through various coupling reactions and subsequent functionalization at the C-3 and C-5 positions. The starting material, 4-bromo-2-iodoanisole 5 {3} (see Table 1), can be easily prepared through regioselective iodination of 4-bromoanisole. 38 2-Iodoanisole [5 {1}] and 2-iodo-3-methoxypyridine [5 {2}] were obtained commercially. The alkynes 7 required for cyclization are readily prepared by the palladium/copper-catalyzed Sonogashira cross-coupling 39 of the methoxy-substituted aryl and/or heteroaryl iodides 5 with terminal alkynes 6 at room temperature. The results are summarized in Table 1. As shown in the table, the requisite alkynes 7 {1-8} are readily obtained by this straightforward approach.

As outlined in Scheme 3, the bromoalkynes $7\{5-8\}$ are readily elaborated to the more highly substituted alkynes **8** via standard palladium-based methodology. As summarized in Table 2, the palladium-catalyzed Suzuki-Miyaura coupling of bromoalkynes $7\{5-8\}$ with boronic acids **10** proceeds in the presence of a base to provide alkynes $8\{I-I3\}$. Bromoalkyne $7\{6\}$ readily reacts with 4-methoxyphenylboronic acid $[10\{I\}]$ under one atmosphere of carbon monoxide in the presence of PdCl₂(dppf) as a catalyst to give the corresponding ketone $8\{I4\}$. Unfortunately, this process affords only a low yield of $8\{I4\}$ (38%) due to the formation of the direct coupling product $8\{I\}$ (14%), as well as recovery of the starting material $7\{6\}$. Work is currently underway to improve this process. The corresponding amines $8\{I5-20\}$ were obtained by palladium-catalyzed amination of several bromoalkynes 7 with amines 11.43 The secondary amines morpholine $[11\{I\}]$ and pyrrolidine $[11\{2\}]$ gave the corresponding products $8\{I5-I8\}$ in moderate yields after 12 h reaction time. As expected, compounds $8\{I9\}$ and $8\{20\}$ were obtained in excellent yields within 3 h when employing n-butylamine $[11\{3\}]$ and 4-methylaniline $[11\{4\}]$ (see the Supporting Information for the experimental details).

As the key step in our library synthesis, variously substituted iodobenzofuran derivatives 9 were efficiently prepared within 1–2 h by electrophile cyclization of the corresponding methoxy-containing alkynes $7\{1-4\}$ and $8\{1-20\}$ using ICl in CH₂Cl₂ at ambient temperature (Table 2 and Figure 2). All of the reactions were monitored by thin layer chromatography and the products purified by column chromatography. We did not systematically investigate the effects of various substituents in the C-5 position of the aromatic ring system. However, it is noteworthy that pyridine derivatives were treated with ICl under our standard electrophilic cyclization conditions, affording the desired furopyridines $9\{3-4\}$ in moderate yields. The presence of an electron-donating OMe group in the para position of the phenyl ring of the \mathbb{R}^1 group gave excellent yields of the desired iodobenzofuran products $9\{5-9\}$ and $9\{19\}$. Also noteworthy is the fact that substituting the alkynyl unit with a thiophene heterocycle gave 3iodobenzofurans 9{10-13} in good to excellent yields. Alkynes 8{10-12}, having a 1cyclohexenyl group, also reacted by electrophilic cyclization to give the desired products 9 $\{14-16\}$. Alkynes with an m-tolyl substituent gave the desired products $9\{17\}$, $9\{20\}$ and $9\{17\}$, $9\{20\}$ {22}. The iodobenzofuran **9**{18} having a carbonyl group in the C-5 position was produced in a good yield. The reaction of C-5 amine-substituted aryl alkynes generally afforded the desired benzofuran products in good yields under ordinary reaction conditions. However, the secondary amine-substituted alkyne $8\{19\}$ produced the desired product $9\{23\}$ in a slightly lower yield. As expected, an aniline-substituted alkyne 8{20} also generated the desired product 9{24}, but in a lower yield. The low yield here is probably due to electrophilic

substitution of the aniline ring of the product $9\{24\}$. This iodobenzofuran synthesis tolerates a wide variety of substituents, including halides, ethers, acetals, aldehydes, ketones, amines, aryl, heteroaryl, and alkyl groups, and proceeds under mild reaction conditions. The 3-iodobenzofurans $9\{I-24\}$ produced by this chemistry should be very useful for the synthesis of a wide variety of substituted benzo[b] furans 14.

The 3-iodobenzofurans **9** can be further elaborated by using a variety of palladium-mediated processes, such as Suzuki-Miyaura coupling, ^{40,41} carbonylative Suzuki coupling, ⁴² Sonogashira coupling, ³⁹ Heck coupling, ⁴⁴ and carboalkoxylation ⁴⁵ (Scheme 4). The crude products **14** were purified by either column chromatography or preparative HPLC. The results of this parallel library synthesis are summarized in Table 3, which indicates that the products **14** can be obtained in moderate to good yields with high purities. The reagents used for substitution of the iodine-containing products **9** were chosen on the basis of their commercial availability (*e.g.* boronic acids **10**, terminal alkynes **6**, styrenes **12**, and alcohols **13**) (Figure 3) and potential drug-like properties, resulting in a virtual library of all theoretically possible products of approximately 5,000 potential compounds. This number was arrived at by determining all possible combinations of the R group variation with available starting materials. However, only a small subset of 121 compounds out of these 5,000 virtual structures was actually made in the laboratory. Most of the selected 121 benzo[*b*] furan library members were Lipinski^{46,47} compliant. The molecular weight, clog P, number of hydrogen bond donors and acceptors, and the number of rotatable bonds were either specified or calculated for each of the library members using the SYBYL⁴⁸ program.

The Suzuki-Miyaura coupling of the 3-iodobenzofurans 9 with various arylboronic acids 10 proceeded smoothly to give the desired products $14\{1-31\}$ in modest yields. Most reactions were complete within 6 h in refluxing toluene (Method A). 40,41 Product 14{24}, containing a tetrahydropyranyl (THP) ether protecting group, was deprotected in situ in 69% yield using aqueous hydrochloric acid in THF at room temperature for a few minutes. ⁴⁹ The carbonylative Suzuki coupling of 3-iodobenzofurans 9 with arylboronic acids 10 has been carried out in anisole in the presence of PdCl₂(PPh₃)₂ under carbon monoxide at atmospheric pressure (Method B). ⁴² These reactions produced both the corresponding CO inserted carbonyl products and the direct Suzuki-Miyaura coupling products. The products were separated by column chromatography to give **14**{32,34,36,38,40,42} and **14**{33,35,37,39,41,43}, respectively. Sonogashira coupling of the 3-iodobenzofurans 9 with various terminal acetylenes 6 nicely provides the corresponding alkynyl products 14{46–77} (Method C). ³⁹ Additionally, we have been able to perform Heck coupling on the 3-iodobenzofurans 9. By allowing the compound to react under Heck reaction conditions in the presence of the styrenes 12, the substituted olefincontaining benzo[b] furan products 14{78–98} were obtained (Method D).⁴⁴ Carboalkoxylation of the 3-iodobenzofurans 9 using one atmosphere of carbon monoxide and various alcohols 13 in the presence of catalytic amounts of Pd(OAc)₂ and dppf ligand afforded the ester-containing benzo[b] furans 14{99–121} (Method E).⁴⁵

In conclusion, the 3-iodobenzofurans **9** have proven to be very useful templates for further diversification by a variety of C-C, C-N, and C-O bond forming reactions, $^{50-53}$ and are thus valuable building blocks for combinatorial chemistry. 54,55 We have demonstrated that 3-iodobenzofurans **9** readily react with various building blocks, *e.g.* boronic acids **10**, terminal alkynes **6**, styrenes **12**, and carbon monoxide plus alcohols **13**, to efficiently construct a 121 member library of highly substituted benzo[b] furans **14**. The desired 3-iodobenzofurans **9** are readily prepared by our previously published electrophilic cyclization chemistry. Of the 121 compounds produced, 74 compounds were obtained in >99% purity. The benzo[b] furan library members **14** will be evaluated against various biological screens by the National Institutes of Health Molecular Library Screening Center Network.

Supplementary Material

Refer to Web version on PubMed Central for supplementary material.

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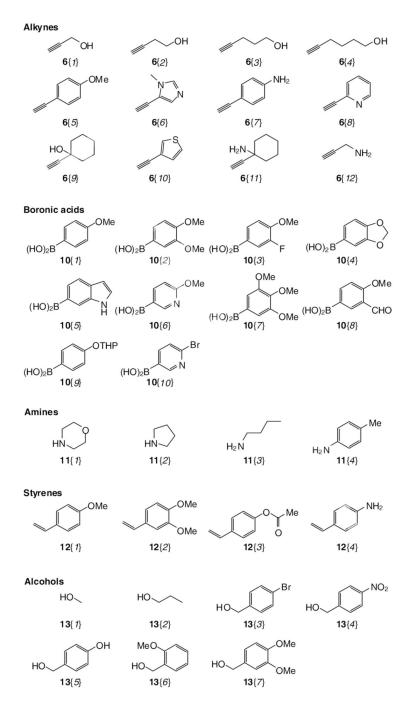
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Figure 1. Some biologically active benzo [b] furans

Figure 2. Synthesis of 3-iodobenzofurans **9**{ *1*–24}



Diverse terminal alkynes $6\{1-12\}$, boronic acids $10\{1-10\}$, amines $11\{1-4\}$, styrenes $12\{1-4\}$, and alcohols $13\{1-7\}$ used for library synthesis

$$\begin{array}{c|c}
\hline
 & E^{+} \\
\hline
 & E
\end{array}$$

 $E^+ = I_2$, ICI, PhSeCI, p-O₂NC₆H₄SCI R = aryl, alkyl

Scheme 1. Synthesis of 2,3-Disubstituted Benzo[b]furans by Electrophilic Cyclization

Scheme 2. Library Design for 2,3,5-Trisubstituted Benzo[*b*] furans **14**

OMe

Br

$$\mathbf{8}\{1-13\}$$
 \mathbf{R}^1

OMe

 \mathbf{R}^1
 \mathbf{R}^1

Scheme 3.

Suzuki-Miyaura Coupling [$8\{1-13\}$], Carbonylative Suzuki Coupling [$8\{14\}$], Amination [$8\{15-20\}$], and Subsequent Iodocyclization [$9\{1-24\}$]

i. 5 mol % Pd(PPh₃)₄, K_2CO_3 (3.0 equiv), and $ArB(OH)_2$ **10**{1,4,7–8} (1.5 equiv) in toluene/ EtOH, 80 °C

ii. 5 mol % Pd(dba)₂, 8 mol % PPh₃, KOH (3.0 equiv), and (Het)ArB(OH)₂ $10\{6\}$ (1.5 equiv) in toluence/EtOH, 80 °C

iii. 5 mol % PdCl₂(dppf), K_2CO_3 (3.0 equiv), NaI (3.0 equiv), CO (1.0 atm), and $ArB(OH)_2$ **10**{*I*} (1.1 equiv) in toluene/EtOH, 80 °C

iv. 5 mol % $Pd_2(dba)_3$, DavePhos (0.1 equiv), NaO^tBu (1.4 equiv), and amines 11 (1.5 equiv) in toluene, 60 °C

A

$$R^{2}$$
 R^{3}
 R^{4}
 R^{2}
 R^{3}
 R^{4}
 R^{2}
 R^{4}
 R^{2}
 R^{2}

Scheme 4.

Synthesis of Benzo[*b*]furans **14** using Various Palladium-Catalyzed Reactions *Method A* (Suzuki-Miyaura coupling): 10% Pd(PPh₃)₄, KOH (3.0 equiv), ₁₀ (1.5 equiv), toluene/EtOH/H₂O (20/5/1), reflux; *Method B* (carbonylative Suzuki coupling): CO (1 atm), 3 mol % PdCl₂(PPh₃)₂, K₂CO₃ (3.0 equiv), NaI (3.0 equiv), **10** (1.1 equiv), anisole, 80 °C; *Method C* (Sonogashira coupling): 3% PdCl₂(PPh₃)₂, 3% CuI, Et₂NH, **6** (1.2 equiv), DMF, 50 °C; *Method D* (Heck coupling): 5 mol % Pd(OAc)₂, *n*-Bu₄NI (1.0 equiv), Na₂CO₃ (2.5 equiv), R³CH=CH₂ 12 (1.2 equiv), DMF, 80 °C; *Method E* (carboalkoxylation): CO (1 atm), 3 mol % Pd(OAc)₂, 5 mol % dppf, TEA (2.0 equiv), R³OH **13** (1.5 equiv), DMF, 70 °C.

compd	A	Z	R^1	yield (%)
7{1}	С	Н	$4\text{-MeOC}_6\text{H}_4$	93
7 {2}	C	Н	$3-MeC_6H_4$	95
7 {3}	N	Н	$4-MeOC_6H_4$	98
7 { <i>4</i> }	N	Н	$3,5\text{-}(MeO)_2C_6H_3$	93
7 {5}	C	Br	1-cyclohexenyl	84
7 { <i>6</i> }	C	Br	$4-\text{MeOC}_6\text{H}_4$	90
7 {7}	C	Br	3-thiophenyl	94
7 {8}	С	Br	$3\text{-MeC}_6\text{H}_4$	93

Library Data for Compounds $8\{I-20\}$ and $9\{I-24\}$

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Table 2

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alkyne 7/8	R	${f R}^2$	<i>t</i> (h)	yield $(\%)^b$	3 -iodoben zofuran $^a 9$	yield $(\%)^b$
7{1}	4-MeOC ₆ H ₄	1		1	9{1}	76
7{2}	$3-\mathrm{MeC_6H_4}$	1	1		9{2}	92
7{3}	$4-{ m MeOC_6H_4}$	1	1		9{3}	76
7{4}	$3.5-(\mathrm{MeO})_2\mathrm{C}_6\mathrm{H}_3$	ı	1	ı	9{4}	58
8 { <i>I</i> }	$4-MeOC_6H_4$	10{1}	∞	69	9{5}	93
8 {2}	$4-\mathrm{MeOC_6H_4}$	10{4}	~	63	{ <i>9</i> }6	68
8 {3}	$4-\mathrm{MeOC_6H_4}$	10{6}	∞	57	6{\\2}	87
8{4}	$4-MeOC_6H_4$	10{7}	∞	63	6 {8}	06
8 {5}	$4-\mathrm{MeOC_6H_4}$	10{8}	∞	72	6 86}	83
8 { <i>6</i> }	3-thiophenyl	10{1}	~	78	6 {10}	91
8{7}	3-thiophenyl	10{4}	~	81	6 {11}	83
8 {8}	3-thiophenyl	10{6}	∞	62	9{12}	78
8 [9]	3-thiophenyl	10{7}	∞	83	9{13}	88
8 {10}	1-cyclohexenyl	10{4}	~	71	9{14}	91
8{11}	1-cyclohexenyl	10{6}	∞	89	9{15}	88
8 {12}	1-cyclohexenyl	10{7}	∞	89	6 [16]	92
8 {13}	$3 ext{-MeC}_6 ext{H}_4$	10{4}	~	29	9{17}	87
8{14}	$4 ext{-MeOC}_6 ext{H}_4$	10 { <i>I</i> }	24	$38(14)^{C}$	9{18}	82
8{15}	$4 ext{-MeOC}_6 ext{H}_4$	11{/}	12	78	6 [19]	84
8 {16}	$3-\mathrm{MeC_6H_4}$	11{7}	12	73	9{20}	82
8{17}	3-thiophenyl	11{/}	12	71	9{21}	81
8 {18}	$3 ext{-MeC}_6 ext{H}_4$	11 {2}	12	59	9{22}	77
8 {19}	$4 ext{-MeOC}_6 ext{H}_4$	11{3}	3	87	9{23}	51 ^d
8 {20}	$4 ext{-MeOC}_6 ext{H}_4$	11{4}	3	93	9{24}	$28^{d,e}$

all reactions were carried out using alkynes 7{1-4} or 8{1-20} and 1.5 equiv of IC1 in CH2C12 at room temperature within 2-3 h, unless otherwise indicated.

 $^{^{}b}$ Isolated yields after column chromatography.

 $^{^{}c}$ Some starting material remained. In parentheses is the yield of the Suzuki-Miyaura direct coupling product.

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 d_{1C1} (2.0 + 1.0 equiv) was used.

 e An inseparable mixture was obtained.

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Library Data for Compounds 14{1-121}

product	6	R³	method	yield $(%)^{b}$	purity (%)	product	6	R³	method	yield $(\%)^b$	purity (%) ^e
14 { <i>I</i> }	9{1}	10{5}	A	39	84	14{65}	6 {8}	(01) 9	C	77	66<
14 { <i>2</i> }	9{2}	10{9}	\mathbf{A}^{a}	47	66<	14{66}	9{12}	(6 } 9	C	76	66<
14 {3}	9{3}	10{1}	A	51	66<	14{67}	9{13}	6 {5}	C	82^{C}	66
14 { <i>4</i> }	9{3}	10{6}	A	38	66	14{68}	9{13}	(6 } 9	၁	<i>L</i> 9	<
14{5}	9{3}	10{7}	A	55	66	14{69}	6 {17}	(9)9	C	52	86
14 [6]	9{5}	10{1}	A	.88 _C	66<	14{70}	6 {18}	6 {2}	C	85	<
14{7}	9{5}	10{6}	A	78	66<	14{71}	6 <i>1161</i>	6 { <i>1</i> }	C	78	66<
14 {8}	9{5}	10{7}	A	83	66<	14{72}	6 <i>116</i>	e {2}	C	57	66<
14{9}	6 {8}	10{10}	A	71^{C}	66	14{73}	6 [16]	(6 } 9	C	78	<
14 { <i>10</i> }	6 86	10{1}	A	57	66<	14{74}	6 <i>1161</i>	6{12}	၁	34	66
14 { <i>II</i> }	6 {10}	10{10}	A	73c	86	14{75}	9{21}	6 {5}	C	$83^{\mathcal{C}}$	<
14{12}	9{11}	10{1}	A	62	66<	14{76}	9{21}	6 {2}	၁	61	66<
14 { <i>13</i> }	6 { <i>11</i> }	10{6}	A	53	66	14{77}	9{21}	(6 } 9	C	86^{c}	<
14{14}	9{14}	10{1}	A	47	66<	14{78}	6 { <i>I</i> }	12{1}	D	299	96
14 { <i>15</i> }	9{14}	10{2}	A	28	66<	14{79}	6 { <i>I</i> }	12{3}	D	61 ^c	66
14 { <i>16</i> }	9{14}	10{6}	Ą	51	66<	14{80}	9{3}	12{1}	D	47^{C}	95
14{17}	9{14}	10{7}	A	69	66<	14{81}	9{3}	12 { <i>2</i> }	D	72^{c}	86
14{18}	9{14}	10{9}	A	53	66	14{82}	9{3}	12 {3}	D	28	76
14 { <i>19</i> }	9{15}	10{3}	A	32	86	14{83}	9{5}	12{1}	D	₂ 69	66
14 {20}	6 {17}	10{1}	A	72^{C}	66<	14{84}	9{5}	12{3}	D	71^{c}	<
14 {2 <i>I</i> }	6 {17}	10{6}	A	<i>L</i> 9	66<	14{85}	6 { <i>9</i> }	12{1}	D	19 _C	86
14 {22}	6 {17}	10{7}	A	73^{C}	66<	14{86}	6 {6}	12{3}	D	71	66
14 {23}	6 {17}	10{9}	A	82^{C}	66<	14{87}	6 { <i>II</i> }	12 {2}	D	71	<
14 {2 <i>4</i> }	9 {18}	10{9}	\mathbf{A}^a	₂ 69	66<	14{88}	9{12}	12{1}	D	78	66
14 {25}	6 <i>1</i> 16}	10{1}	A	$81^{\mathcal{C}}$	66<	14{89}	9{13}	12{1}	D	69	93
14 {26}	6 [16]	10{6}	A	73	66<	14{90}	9{14}	12{1}	D	61	86
14 {27}	9{21}	10{ / }	A	83^{C}	<	14{9 <i>I</i> }	9{14}	12{4}	D	57	86
14 {28}	9{21}	10{6}	A	71^{C}	66<	14{92}	6 { <i>17</i> }	12{1}	D	16 ^c	66

14{60}

14{62}

14{42,(43)} **14**{44,(45)}

14{46}

14{47} 14{48} 14{49} 14{50} 14{51} 14{52} 14{53} 14{54} 14{55} 14{56} 14{57} 14{58}

14{32,(33)} 14{34,(35)} 14{36,(37)} 14{38,(39)} 14{40,(41)}

14{31}

product

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 $^{\it c}$ Isolated yield after column chromatography.

 $\boldsymbol{d}_{\boldsymbol{\mathrm{The}}}$ number in parentheses is the yield of Suzuki-Miyaura direct coupling product.

 $^e\mathrm{UV}$ purity determined at 214 nm after preparative HPLC.

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 $[\]frac{b}{b}$ Isolated yield after preparative HPLC.