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Synthesis of 3-Substituted 2-Trifluoro(trichloro)methyl-2 *H*-chromenes by Reaction of Salicylaldehydes with Activated Trihalomethyl Alkenes

Vladislav Yu. Korotaev, Igor B. Kutyashev,
and Vyacheslav Ya. Sosnovskikh

Department of Chemistry, Ural State University, Lenina 51, Ekaterinburg 620083,
Russian Federation

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ABSTRACT: *The reaction of activated trihalomethylsubstituted alkenes with salicylaldehydes in the presence of triethylamine gives 3-substituted 2-trifluoromethylchroman-4-ols and 2-trifluoro(trichloro)methyl-2H-chromenes in high yields.* © 2005 Wiley Periodicals, Inc. *Heteroatom Chem* 16:492–496, 2005; Published online in Wiley InterScience (www.interscience.wiley.com). DOI 10.1002/hc.20146

INTRODUCTION

Substituted 2,2-dimethylchromans and chromenes are common natural products which are widely distributed among many plants [1]. Furthermore, they have considerable biological importance, especially as potentially useful pesticides (antijuvénile hormones precocene I and precocene II [2,3]) and drug candidates in the field of potassium channel openers (for example, cromakalim, a highly potent antihypertensive drug [4–7]). Several analogues of 2-methyl-2*H*-chromene also show interesting pharmaceuti-

cal activity and are potential medicinal agents [1,8]. Because of their reactivity and relative stability, 2-methyl- and 2,2-dimethyl-2*H*-chromenes have an important role and are valuable intermediates for synthetic purposes in chroman chemistry [9–14].

The introduction of fluorine in place of hydrogen to modify the bioactivity of organic molecules is a well-established practice [15–18]. As a result, considerable efforts have been made in the development of trifluoromethylated analogues of precocenes [19–21], cromakalim [22–24], and lactarochromal [19,20,25], in which both or one of the methyl groups in the *gem*-dimethyl moiety are replaced by the CF₃ group. In spite of advances in this area, published data on the synthesis of 2-(trihalomethyl)-2*H*-chromenes are lacking. To our knowledge, there has been only one report on the preparation of 2-(trifluoromethyl)chroman-4-one [26], which may be regarded as a precursor for the synthesis of 2-trifluoromethyl-2*H*-chromene.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

It is well known that the reactions of salicylaldehydes with acrylonitrile [27–29], alkyl vinyl ketones [30–33], and nitro alkenes [34–39] give Δ^3 -chromenes containing electron-withdrawing substituents at the 3-position. Although these compounds are not found in nature, their derivatives are reported to be useful

Correspondence to: Vyacheslav Ya. Sosnovskikh; e-mail: vyacheslav.sosnovskikh@usu.ru.

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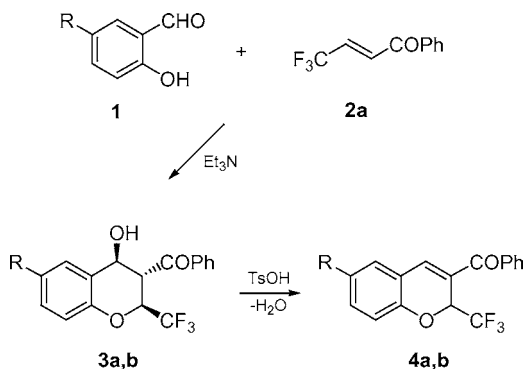
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from industrial and medical points of view [40,41]. These facts and our continuing interest in the chemistry of trifluoromethyl analogues of natural chromans and chromenes [19,20,25] led us to investigate the synthesis of the hitherto unknown 2-CX₃-3-R-2*H*-chromenes (X = F, Cl; R = CPh, NO₂). In this work, we report a simple and convenient synthesis of these compounds involving the condensation of salicylaldehydes **1** with trihaloethylidene derivatives of acetophenone and nitromethane **2a–c**, prepared from trifluoro(trichloro)acetaldehyde hydrates [42–45]. Although much attention has been paid to the chemistry of alkenes **2** mainly due to the possibility of using them as an excellent building blocks for the preparation of a variety of CX₃-containing compounds [46–53], their reactions with salicylaldehydes were not described in the literature.

We have found that salicylaldehyde and 5-bromosalicylaldehyde react with (*E*)-4,4,4-trifluoro-1-phenyl-2-buten-1-one (**2a**) in the presence of triethylamine in dichloromethane for 1–3 days at room temperature to afford chromanols **3a,b** in 71% and 56% yields, respectively. In all cases, only one regio- and stereo-isomer was obtained (Scheme 1). A plausible mechanism for the reaction involves triethylamine catalyzed tandem conjugate addition/aldol-type reaction [38]. When triethylamine was replaced by DABCO, the reaction did not occur and only resinification was observed.

The configuration and the conformational preferences of chromanols **3a,b** have been assigned on the basis of ¹H NMR data. In particular, two coupling constants, the *J*_{2,3} = 10.5–10.6 Hz (axial–axial) and *J*_{3,4} = 9.7 Hz (axial–pseudoaxial), indicate an equatorial position for the 2-CF₃ and 3-COPh substituents and a pseudoequatorial position for the 4-OH group in the mobile dihydropyran fragment of **3a,b**, which are therefore *trans-trans* products [34]. The subsequent dehydration of the chromanols **3a,b** to the corresponding 2*H*-chromenes **4a,b** was performed



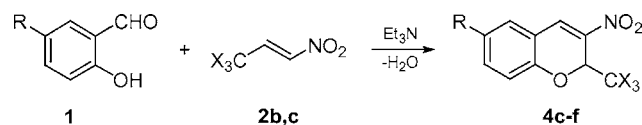
SCHEME 1

in refluxing toluene for 3 h in the presence of *p*-toluene sulfonic acid as a catalyst in excellent yields (Scheme 1).

Next, we investigated the reaction of salicylaldehydes **1** with (*E*)-3,3,3-trifluoro- and 3,3,3-trichloro-1-nitroprop-1-enes (**2b,c**), for this, it was anticipated, would give a range of new trihalomethylated 3-nitro-2*H*-chromenes as precursors to a variety of medicinally important chroman derivatives [40,41]. It turned out that unlike alkene **2a**, the reaction of trihaloethylidene nitromethanes **2b,c** with salicylaldehydes **1** is much faster, reaching completion within 10 min to 2 h. Moreover, under the conditions used, additional step to affect dehydration of the corresponding chromanols **3** was not necessary since the reaction proceeded smoothly to give 2-trifluoromethyl- and 2-trichloromethyl-3-nitro-2*H*-chromenes **4c–f** directly in 76–99% yields (Scheme 2). It seems that the CX₃ group favors the initial Michael addition reaction due to its electron-withdrawing character, which lowers the LUMO level of the molecule [54]. However, the halogenated substituents do not exercise significant control over the reaction: the regiochemistry is determined by the nitro or acyl group. In the light of the present interest in fluoro-containing compounds as pharmaceutical intermediates [15–18], this novel entry to fluorinated analogues of 2-methyl-2*H*-chromene is noteworthy.

The structures of compounds **4** compare well with the results of elemental analysis, ¹H, ¹⁹F NMR, and IR spectroscopy. A characteristic feature of the ¹H NMR spectra of **4c–f** is the appearance of singlet at δ 8.03–8.13 ppm for the H-4 proton and quartet at δ 6.09 ppm with *J*_{H,F} = 6.2–6.3 Hz for the H-2 proton (singlet at δ 6.32–6.33 ppm in the case of **4e,f**). All reactions are clean, easy to perform, and proceed at room temperature; however, trichloroethylidene acetonitrile did not react under similar reaction conditions. The results obtained by using two salicylaldehydes **1** and three activated alkenes **2a–c** are summarized in Table 1.

In conclusion, the reaction of salicylaldehydes with activated trihalomethyl substituted alkenes provides convenient preparative process from readily available starting materials to 2-CF₃- and 2-CCl₃-2*H*-chromenes, which may be considered as a new precursors in the synthesis of other useful chroman derivatives.



SCHEME 2

TABLE 1 Synthesis of Chromanols **3a,b** and Chromenes **4a–f** by Reaction of Salicylaldehydes **1** with Trihalomethyl Substituted Alkenes **2a–c**

<i>R</i>	<i>X</i>	Compound	Yield (%)	<i>Mp</i> (°C)
H	F	3a	71	195–196
Br	F	3b	56	205–206
H	F	4a	98	98–100
Br	F	4b	80	110–112
H	F	4c	76	82–83
Br	F	4d	93	97–98
H	Cl	4e	94	105–106
Br	Cl	4f	85	123–125

EXPERIMENTAL

Melting points obtained were uncorrected. IR spectra were recorded on an Perkin-Elmer Spectrum BX-II instrument as KBr disks. ^1H and ^{19}F NMR spectra were recorded on a Bruker DRX-400 spectrometer (^1H at 400 MHz and ^{19}F at 376 MHz) with TMS and C_6F_6 as internal standards. All solvents used were dried and distilled per standard procedures. The starting trihalomethyl substituted alkenes **2a–c** were prepared by direct condensation of the appropriate trihaloacetaldehyde hydrates with acetophenone and nitromethane according to described procedures [42–45].

Trans-trans-3-Benzoyl-2-(trifluoromethyl)chroman-4-ol (3a). To a solution of salicylaldehyde (0.64 g, 5.2 mmol) and alkene **2a** (1.05 g, 5.2 mmol) in dichloromethane (10 mL) was added triethylamine (0.10 g, 1.0 mmol). The mixture was allowed to stand for 72 h at r.t. After partial evaporation of the solvent, the residue was diluted with hexane (6 mL) and the crystalline material was collected by filtration to give 1.2 g (71%) of **3a** as a colorless powder. IR (KBr): ν 3485, 3420, 1668, 1583, 1485 cm^{-1} . ^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3/TMS): δ 2.27 (d, 1H, OH, $J = 7.4$ Hz), 4.15 (dd, 1H, H-3, $J = 10.5$, 9.7 Hz), 4.90 (dq, 1H, H-2, $J = 10.5$, 5.8 Hz), 5.30 (dd, 1H, H-4, $J = 9.7$, 7.4 Hz), 6.99 (dd, 1H, H-8, $J = 8.2$, 1.0 Hz), 7.08 (td, 1H, H-6, $J = 7.5$, 1.0 Hz), 7.29 (br t, 1H, H-7, $J = 7.8$ Hz), 7.45–7.55 (m, 3H, H-5, H-3', H-5'), 7.64 (tt, 1H, H-4', $J = 7.4$, 1.0 Hz), 8.01–8.04 (m, 2H, H-2', H-6'). ^{19}F NMR (376 MHz, $\text{CDCl}_3/\text{C}_6\text{F}_6$): δ 85.63 (d, CF_3 , $J = 5.8$ Hz). Anal. Calcd for $\text{C}_{17}\text{H}_{13}\text{F}_3\text{O}_3$: C, 63.36; H, 4.07. Found: C, 63.00; H, 3.95.

Trans-trans-3-Benzoyl-6-bromo-2-(trifluoromethyl)chroman-4-ol (3b). This compound was prepared analogously to **3a** for 24 h as a colorless powder. IR (KBr): ν 3483, 3431, 1673, 1633, 1475 cm^{-1} . ^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3/TMS): δ 2.32 (d, 1H, OH, $J = 7.2$ Hz), 4.12 (dd, 1H, H-3, $J = 10.6$,

9.7 Hz), 4.90 (dq, 1H, H-2, $J = 10.6$, 5.7 Hz), 5.27 (dd, 1H, H-4, $J = 9.7$, 7.2 Hz), 6.88 (d, 1H, H-8, $J = 8.7$ Hz), 7.38 (ddd, 1H, H-7, $J = 8.7$, 2.4, 1.0 Hz), 7.50–7.55 (m, 2H, H-3', H-5'), 7.63 (dd, 1H, H-5, $J = 2.4$, 0.8 Hz), 7.65 (tt, 1H, H-4', $J = 7.4$, 1.1 Hz), 8.00–8.03 (m, 2H, H-2', H-6'). ^{19}F NMR (376 MHz, $\text{CDCl}_3/\text{C}_6\text{F}_6$): δ 85.58 (d, CF_3 , $J = 5.7$ Hz). Anal. Calcd for $\text{C}_{17}\text{H}_{12}\text{BrF}_3\text{O}_3$: C, 50.90; H, 3.01. Found: C, 51.03; H, 3.01.

3-Benzoyl-2-(trifluoromethyl)-2H-chromene (4a). A mixture of **3a** (0.11 g, 0.3 mmol) and a catalytic amounts of TsOH in toluene (5 mL) was refluxed for 3 h. The resulting solution was concentrated under reduced pressure, and the precipitate that formed was recrystallized from hexane as a colorless powder. IR (KBr): ν 1637, 1603, 1571, 1482 cm^{-1} . ^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3/TMS): δ 6.09 (q, 1H, H-2, $J = 7.1$ Hz), 6.99 (td, 1H, H-6, $J = 7.5$, 1.0 Hz), 7.02 (d, 1H, H-8, $J = 8.2$ Hz), 7.17 (dd, 1H, H-5, $J = 7.5$, 1.6 Hz), 7.29 (s, 1H, H-4), 7.35 (ddd, 1H, H-7, $J = 8.2$, 7.5, 1.6 Hz), 7.50–7.55 (m, 2H, H-3', H-5'), 7.62 (tt, 1H, H-4', $J = 7.4$, 1.3 Hz), 7.75–7.78 (m, 2H, H-2', H-6'). ^{19}F NMR (376 MHz, $\text{CDCl}_3/\text{C}_6\text{F}_6$): δ 82.76 (d, CF_3 , $J = 7.1$ Hz). Anal. Calcd for $\text{C}_{17}\text{H}_{11}\text{F}_3\text{O}_2$: C, 67.11; H, 3.64. Found: C, 67.10; H, 3.63.

3-Benzoyl-6-bromo-2-(trifluoromethyl)-2H-chromene (4b). This compound was prepared analogously to **4a** as a colorless powder. IR (KBr): ν 1645, 1598, 1564, 1473 cm^{-1} . ^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3/TMS): δ 6.09 (q, 1H, H-2, $J = 7.0$ Hz), 6.92 (d, 1H, H-8, $J = 8.7$ Hz), 7.20 (s, 1H, H-4), 7.32 (d, 1H, H-5, $J = 2.4$ Hz), 7.43 (dd, 1H, H-7, $J = 8.7$, 2.4 Hz), 7.50–7.55 (m, 2H, H-3', H-5'), 7.64 (tt, 1H, H-4', $J = 7.5$, 1.3 Hz), 7.74–7.77 (m, 2H, H-2', H-6'). ^{19}F NMR (376 MHz, $\text{CDCl}_3/\text{C}_6\text{F}_6$): δ 83.03 (d, CF_3 , $J = 7.0$ Hz). Anal. Calcd for $\text{C}_{17}\text{H}_{10}\text{BrF}_3\text{O}_2$: C, 53.29; H, 2.63. Found: C, 53.43; H, 2.60.

General Procedure for the Synthesis of 3-Nitrochromenes **4c–f**

To a solution of salicylaldehyde **1** (10 mmol) and nitroalkene **2** (10 mmol) in a minimal volume of dichloromethane (1.5–5 mL) was added triethylamine (0.15 g, 1.5 mmol). The mixture was stirred for 2 h (10 min in the case of **4d**) at r.t. After evaporation of the solvent, the residue was recrystallized from hexane to give compound **4** as yellow needles.

3-Nitro-2-(trifluoromethyl)-2H-chromene (4c). IR (KBr): ν 1651, 1608, 1571, 1525, 1457, 1327 cm^{-1} . ^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3/TMS): δ 6.09 (q, 1H, H-2, $J = 6.3$ Hz), 7.07 (d, 1H, H-8, $J = 8.2$ Hz), 7.11 (td, 1H, H-6, $J = 7.5$, 1.0 Hz), 7.37 (dd, 1H, H-5, $J = 7.6$, 1.6 Hz), 7.46 (ddd, 1H, H-7, $J = 8.2$, 7.5, 1.6 Hz), 8.12 (s, 1H, H-4). ^{19}F NMR (376 MHz, $\text{CDCl}_3/\text{C}_6\text{F}_6$): δ 83.92

(d, CF₃, *J* = 6.3 Hz). Anal. Calcd for C₁₀H₆F₃NO₃: C, 48.99; H, 2.47; N, 5.71. Found: C, 49.03; H, 2.49; N, 5.61.

6-Bromo-3-nitro-2-(trifluoromethyl)-2H-chromene (4d). IR (KBr): ν 1650, 1599, 1564, 1520, 1473, 1331 cm⁻¹. ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃/TMS): δ 6.09 (q, 1H, H-2, *J* = 6.2 Hz), 6.98 (d, 1H, H-8, *J* = 8.7 Hz), 7.50 (d, 1H, H-5, *J* = 2.4 Hz), 7.54 (dd, 1H, H-7, *J* = 8.7, 2.4 Hz), 8.04 (s, 1H, H-4). ¹⁹F NMR (376 MHz, CDCl₃/C₆F₆): δ 84.02 (d, CF₃, *J* = 6.2 Hz). Anal. Calcd for C₁₀H₅BrF₃NO₃: C, 37.07; H, 1.56; N, 4.32. Found: C, 37.16; H, 1.45; N, 4.24.

3-Nitro-2-(trichloromethyl)-2H-chromene (4e). IR (KBr): ν 1642, 1605, 1526, 1453, 1328 cm⁻¹. ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃/TMS): δ 6.33 (s, 1H, H-2), 7.09 (td, 1H, H-6, *J* = 7.5, 1.0 Hz), 7.11 (d, 1H, H-8, *J* = 8.2 Hz), 7.36 (dd, 1H, H-5, *J* = 7.5, 1.6 Hz), 7.46 (ddd, 1H, H-7, *J* = 8.2, 7.5, 1.6 Hz), 8.13 (s, 1H, H-4). Anal. Calcd for C₁₀H₆Cl₃NO₃: C, 40.78; H, 2.05; N, 4.76. Found: C, 40.76; H, 1.87; N, 4.75.

6-Bromo-3-nitro-2-(trichloromethyl)-2H-chromene (4f). IR (KBr): ν 1642, 1601, 1562, 1523, 1472, 1335 cm⁻¹. ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃/TMS): δ 6.32 (s, 1H, H-2), 7.01 (dd, 1H, H-8, *J* = 8.7, 0.4 Hz), 7.49 (d, 1H, H-5, *J* = 2.4 Hz), 7.54 (dd, 1H, H-7, *J* = 8.7, 2.4 Hz), 8.03 (s, 1H, H-4). Anal. Calcd for C₁₀H₅BrCl₃NO₃: C, 32.17; H, 1.35; N, 3.75. Found: C, 32.34; H, 1.25; N, 3.72.

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