Novel biflavonoids from the leaves of *Leucaena diversifolia* and *Albizia procera* and their protein binding efficiency

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The leaves of *Leucaena diversifolia* and *Albizia procera* have been found to contain two novel biflavonoids, leucaediflavone (1) and albiproflavone (2) which were characterized as (5,2',3'-tri hydroxy-5',6'-furano-7,8-dimethylallyloxy)-(5,3'-dihydroxy-5',6'-furano-7,8-dimethylallyloxy)-6C-2'-biflavon and bis[5,3',4'- tri hydroxy-2'-hydroxymethyl-5',6'-furano-8,7-(3-hydroxyphenyl]-6C-6'-biflavonyl, respectively on the basis of spectral (UV, IR, MS, 1D and 2D NMR) evidences. Both showed protein binding efficiency 201.81 and 253.05 μg BSA/mg respectively.

Flavonoidal oligomers are well known for their astringent nature causing feed deterrence for the herbivores\(^1\). In our programme on feed deterrent principles from tree leaves, we herein report for the first time the presence of novel biflavonoids, leucaediflavone and albiproflavone from *Leucaena diversifolia* and *Albizia procera* (Fam. : Leguminosae) leaves, respectively, and their protein binding efficiency.

Results and discussion

Leucaediflavone 1, was obtained as light brown amorphous solid m.p. 190°. It responded positive test for flavonoid\(^2\) and negative test for sugar\(^3\). The UV spectrum gave an indication of flavonoid skeleton by showing absorption at 258, 270 and 348 nm\(^4\). The positive FABMS of 1 showed high molecular ion peak at \(m/z\) 767 [M + H]\(^+\) corresponding to formula C\(_{44}H_{30}O_{13}\) in accordance with NMR data indicated it to be biflavonoid. The IR spectrum of 1 exhibited absorption bands at 3460 (OH), 1650 (chelated carbonyl), 1363 (gem dimethyl group), 1510 and 1166 cm\(^{-1}\) (fused furan ring). The UV spectral observations with diagnostic shift reagents (experimental) indicated that there were hydroxylation on 5,2',3' positions\(^5\). On the basis of UV data the location of OH group could be assigned on C-5, C-3' in both the monomers of biflavonoid as well as an OH at C-2' in I unit. The pentahydroxy nature of 1 was also supported by the \(^1\)H NMR, exhibiting a downfield chemical shift as a sharp singlet at δ 12.5 integrated for two protons of OH groups (D\(_2\)O exchangeable)\(^6\) at C-5 in both monomeric units and broad hump between δ 8.1-9.0 suggested the presence of another three phenolic hydroxyl groups on B rings at C-2', C-3' of unit I and C-3' of unit II (all D\(_2\)O exchangeable)\(^5\). Diagnostic C-3 protons for biflavonoid structure were confirmed by the presence of singlet at δ 6.64 (2H). Location of three aromatic protons were assigned by the chemical shift appearing as singlet δ 7.37 for C-6 of unit II, and C-4' of both units. Gem dimethyl grouping adjacent to oxygen with olefinic cis protons were attributed due to proton signals at δ 1.21 (6H, s, 2 x Me), 0.83 (6H, s, 2 x Me), 7.4 (2H, d, J 9 Hz) and 6.8 (2H, d, J 9 Hz)\(^6\). Presence of two equally shielded furan rings was confirmed by the presence of signals at δ 6.42 (2H, d, J 2 Hz) and 6.16 (2H, d, J 2 Hz)\(^6\).

In FABMS the molecular ion peak at \(m/z\) 349 due to double RDA and release of radical CH= C=O indicated linking of ring A of I unit to the ring B of II, and \(m/z\) 307 followed by appearance of mass ion at \(m/z\) 217 due to breaking interflavonoid linkage also supported the said structure. The substitution pattern of ring A and B as well as interflavonoid linkage were also established by HMBC experiment (Fig. 1).

All the available features, with the absence of AB system in molecule and biosynthetic consideration\(^7\) led to conclude that the two chromene rings were attached on A rings of biflavonoids on C-7 and C-8 in both the units, and interflavonoid linkage was between C-6 and C-2'. Thus leucaediflavone 1, could be characterized as (5,2',3'- tri hydroxy-5',6'-furano-7,8-dimethylallyloxy)-(5,3'-dihydroxy-5',6'-furano-7,8-dimethylallyloxy)-6C-2'-biflavon (Fig. 1).

Albiproflavone 2 was obtained as a dark yellow powder
from leaves of *Albizia procera*, m.p. 216° with molecular formula C_{44}H_{26}O_{16} (FABMS). It also answered test for flavonoid and showed IR absorption at 3419 (hydroxyl), 1656 cm^{-1} (chelated carbonyl). The UV spectrum exhibited characteristic bands of a flavone skeleton at \( \lambda_{\text{max}} \) (MeOH) 254, 266 and 348 nm and with shift reagents it was found to be with 5,3' and 4' hydroxyl groups. The \(^{13}\text{C NMR} \) showed 22 signals for 44 carbons indicating symmetric nature of biflavone molecule. \(^{1}\text{H NMR} \) of 2 also displayed the highly shielded chemical shifts as singlet at \( \delta \) 13.1 and a broad hump from 8.2–9.7 integrating for two proton and six protons (D_{2}O exchangeable) respectively for OH at C-5, C-3', and 4' and C-13 on both the units. The C-3 protons on I and II monomer were inferred by the observation of broad singlet at \( \delta \) 6.57 (2H). Appearance of two doublets at \( \delta \) 6.24 (2H, J 1.2 Hz) and 6.5 (2H, J 1.2 Hz) were indicative of furan rings in molecule. The \(^{1}\text{H-}^{13}\text{C long range coupling} \) between proton of C-4'' to C-6' and C-5'' confirmed the fusion of 2'', 3'' of furan to C-5' and C-6'. Two doublet at \( \delta \) 7.4 (2H, J 8.4 Hz) and 6.98 (2H, J 8.4 Hz) were suggestive of ortho coupled protons of additional aromatic D rings and a broad singlet at \( \delta \) 7.49 supported for meta coupled proton of C-14. The fusion of D ring to 7 and 8 position of A ring was evident from observed cross peak in HMBC (Fig. 2). FABMS of 2 exhibited the fragment at \( m/z \) 149 due to attachment of furan at 5' and 6' positions of B ring and peak at \( m/z \) 287 was due to presence of D-I, D-II ring fused with A-I, A-II at 7 and 8 positions. In the aliphatic region the presence of singlet at \( \delta \) 2.04 (D_{2}O exchangeable), with a multiple at \( \delta \) 3.7 led for assignment of CH_{2}OH. It was further supported by existence of \(^{2}\text{J} \) correlation ship with C-2' and \(^{3}\text{J} \) with C-1' (Fig. 2). Thus albiproflavone 2 could be characterized as bis[5-3',4'-trihydroxy-2'-hydroxymethyl-5',6'-furano-8,7-(3-hydroxyphenyl)]-6C-6-biflavonyl (Fig. 2).
ing the involvement of the dimeric flavone in protein binding similar to condensed tannin in woody plants.

**Experimental**

M.ps. were determined on Bock Monoscope and are uncorrected. UV spectra were recorded on a Unichem UV-2 spectrophotometer, and IR spectra on a Perkin-Elmer infra cord 157 spectrophotometer, NMR spectra (DMSO-d$_6$) on a Bruker 300 spectrometer (300 MHz) with TMS as internal standard and FAB mass spectra on a Jeol SX 102/DA-6000 spectrophotometer data system using argon/xenon (6 KV, 10 MA) as the FAB gas.

The leaves of *L. diversifolia* and *A. procera* were collected from the Central Research Farm of the Indian Grassland and Fodder Research Institute, Jhansi.

**Extraction and isolation of leucaediflavone (1):** Fresh leaves (4 kg) of *L. diversifolia* were homogenized with acetone water (7:3) containing 0.1% ascorbic acid 2–3 times. The whole extract was left overnight and filtered. The total acetone extract was reduced to aqueous phase under vacuum. The resultant after washing with each Et$_2$O and EtOAc was diluted with methanol (1:1) to charge on Sephadex LH-20 column (equilibrated with 50% ac. methanol) and eluted with 50% methanol. The pooled eluants (50% methanol) were rechromatographed over Sephadex LH-20 column and eluted with methanol: water in different ratio. The fractions from methanol: water (3:7), were concentrated and lyophilized as leucaediflavone (I) (R$_f$ = 0.72 PC, BAW); $\lambda_{max}$ (MeOH) (log e) 258 (6.39), 270 (6.3), 348 (6.45) nm; (NaOme) 275 (6.32), 402 (6.47) nm; (AlCl$_3$), 272 (6.21), 300 (6.06), 416 (6.47) nm; (AlCl$_3$ + HCl) 262 (6.36), 276 (6.36), 294 (6.36), 360 (6.2), 382 (6.2) nm; (NaOAc) 268 (6.37), 414 (6.31) nm; (NaOAc/H$_2$BO$_3$), 258 (6.32), 366 (6.32) nm; $\nu_{max}$ (KBr) 3460 (OH), 1650 (cheledated >C=O), 1363 (gem dimethyl), 1513, 1166 (furan) cm$^{-1}$; FABMS (+ve mode) m/z 767 [M + H$^+$] (C$_{44}$H$_{30}$O$_{13}$)$_2$; $\delta$ (DMSO-d$_6$) 6.64 (2H, s, 2 × H-3), 7.34 (3H, s, H-6, 2 × H-4'), 7.4 (2H, d, J 8.4, 2 × H-4''), 6.8 (2H, d, J 9.2, 2 × H-5''), 1.21 (6H, s, 2Me), 0.83 (6H, d, 2H, s, 2 × H-5''), 6.16 (2H, s, 2 × H-5''), 12.5 (2H, s, OH, D$_2$O exchangeable) and 8.9–9.0 (3H, s, OH, D$_2$O exchangeable); $\delta$ (DMSO-d$_6$) 163.5 (C-2' II), 106.8 (C-3' II), 180.2 (C-4' II), 162.3 (C-5' I), 110.3 (C-6' I), 94.3 (C-6' II), 145.3 (C-7' II), 145.8, 107.3 (C-8', 3'II), 157.2 (C-9' II), 105.3 (C-10' II), 125.5 (C-1' I), 127.5, 149.5 (C-2' II), 112.3 (C-2' II), 152.3 (C-3' I), 151.4 (C-3' II), 113.5 (C-4' I), 144.3 (C-5', 2' II), 104.3 (C-6', 3', 2' II), 110.9 (C-4' II), 119.4 (C-5' II), 114.9 (C-4' II), 129.4 (C-5' II), 78.5 (C-6' II), 28.4 (C-7', 8', 9' II).

**Extraction and isolation of albiproflavone (2):** Fresh leaves (4.5 kg) of *A. procera* were processed as described earlier and after usual work up the aqeous phase in methanol: water (1: 1) was chromatographed over Sephadex LH-20 column and eluates collected with 50% methanol were subjected for preparative TLC (Si-gel, EtOAc : MeOH : H$_2$O, 12 : 1 : 1) to yield the product as dark yellow solid (R$_f$ 0.85); $\lambda_{max}$ (MeOH) (log e) 254 (6.49), 266 (6.3), 348 (6.55) nm; (NaOMe) 266 (6.5), 402 (6.62) nm; (AlCl$_3$) 272 (6.79), 302 (6.52), 326 (6.0), 426 (6.75) nm; (AlCl$_3$+HCI) 274 (6.6), 294 (6.71), 362 (6.63), 384 (6.65) nm; (NaOAc) 268 (6.79), 400 (6.52) nm; (NaOAc/H$_2$BO$_3$) 258 (6.7), 366 (6.7), 376 (6.75) nm; $\nu_{max}$ (KBr) 3419 (OH), 1656 (cheledated CO), 1610, 1124 (furan) cm$^{-1}$; m/z 811 [M + H$^+$] (C$_{44}$H$_{26}$O$_{16}^+$); $\delta$ (DMSO-d$_6$) 6.57 (2H, s, 2 × H-3), 7.49 (2H, s, 2 × H-14), 7.4 (2H, d, J 7.4, 2 × H-12), 6.9 (2H, d, J 7.4, 2 × H-11), 3.7 (4H, m, 2 × H-1'''), 6.24 (2H, d, J 1.2, 2 × H-4''), 6.5 (2H, d, J 1.2, 2 × H-5''), 13.01 (2H, s, 2 × H-5, D$_2$O exchangeable), 8.2–9.7 (6H, b hump, 2 × H-3'-4', 13D$_2$O exchangeable), 2.04 (2H, s, 2 × H-1'''), D$_2$O exchangeable); $\delta$ (DMSO-d$_6$) 162.9 (C-2' II), 102.8 (C-3' II), 181.3 (C-4' II), 157.2 (C-5' I), 111.2 (C-6' II), 113.4 (C-7' II), 114.3 (C-8' II), 149.3 (C-9' II), 112.0 (C-10' II), 107.3 (C-12' II), 142.3 (C-13' II), 109.4 (C-14' II), 122.9 (C-1' II), 128.8 (C-2' II), 158.3 (C-3' II), 162.1 (C-4' II), 148.9 (C-5', 2' II), 128.8 (C-6', 3' II), 110.3 (C-4' I), 119.4 (C-5' I), 42.30 (C-1''', II).

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