

This is a repository copy of *An improved synthesis of (2E,4Z)-6-(benzyloxy)-4-bromohexa-2,4-dien-1-ol*.

White Rose Research Online URL for this paper:

<https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/id/eprint/3374/>

---

**Article:**

Clarke, Paul A. [orcid.org/0000-0003-3952-359X](https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3952-359X), Rolla, Gabriele A., Cridland, Andrew P. et al. (1 more author) (2007) An improved synthesis of (2E,4Z)-6-(benzyloxy)-4-bromohexa-2,4-dien-1-ol. *Tetrahedron*. pp. 9124-9128. ISSN: 0040-4020

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tet.2007.06.071>

---

**Reuse**

Items deposited in White Rose Research Online are protected by copyright, with all rights reserved unless indicated otherwise. They may be downloaded and/or printed for private study, or other acts as permitted by national copyright laws. The publisher or other rights holders may allow further reproduction and re-use of the full text version. This is indicated by the licence information on the White Rose Research Online record for the item.

**Takedown**

If you consider content in White Rose Research Online to be in breach of UK law, please notify us by emailing [eprints@whiterose.ac.uk](mailto:eprints@whiterose.ac.uk) including the URL of the record and the reason for the withdrawal request.



**Universities of Leeds, Sheffield and York**  
**<http://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/>**

---

This is an author produced version of a paper to be/subsequently published in **Tetrahedron**. (This paper has been peer-reviewed but does not include final publisher proof-corrections or journal pagination.)

White Rose Research Online URL for this paper:  
<http://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/3374>

---

**Published paper**

Clarke, Paul A., Rolla, Gabriele A., Cridland, Andrew P. and Gill, Andrew A.  
(2007) An Improved Synthesis of (2E,4Z)-6-(benzyloxy)-4-bromohexa- 2,4-dien-1-ol§. Tetrahedron, 63. 9124-9128.

---

# Accepted Manuscript

Title: An Improved Synthesis of (2*E*,4*Z*)-6-(benzyloxy)-4-bromohexa-2,4-dien-1-ol<sup>§</sup>

Authors: Paul A. Clarke, Gabriele A. Rolla, Andrew P. Cridland, Andrew A. Gill



PII: S0040-4020(07)01124-6  
DOI: [10.1016/j.tet.2007.06.071](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tet.2007.06.071)  
Reference: TET 16863

To appear in: *Tetrahedron*

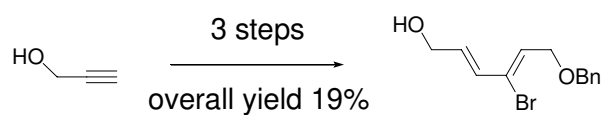
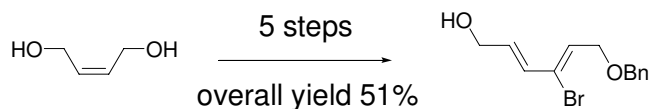
Received Date: 24 May 2007  
Revised Date: 16 June 2007  
Accepted Date: 21 June 2007

Please cite this article as: Clarke PA, Rolla GA, Cridland AP, Gill AA. An Improved Synthesis of (2*E*,4*Z*)-6-(benzyloxy)-4-bromohexa-2,4-dien-1-ol<sup>§</sup>, *Tetrahedron* (2007), doi: 10.1016/j.tet.2007.06.071

This is a PDF file of an unedited manuscript that has been accepted for publication. As a service to our customers we are providing this early version of the manuscript. The manuscript will undergo copyediting, typesetting, and review of the resulting proof before it is published in its final form. Please note that during the production process errors may be discovered which could affect the content, and all legal disclaimers that apply to the journal pertain.

**An Improved Synthesis of (2*E*,4*Z*)-6-(benzyloxy)-4-bromohexa-2,4-dien-1-ol.**

Paul A. Clarke,\* Gabriele A. Rolla, Andrew P. Cridland and Andrew A. Gill.

**Literature Route****Improved Route**

# An Improved Synthesis of (2*E*,4*Z*)-6-(benzyloxy)-4-bromohexa-2,4-dien-1-ol.<sup>§</sup>

Paul A. Clarke,<sup>a, b\*</sup> Gabriele A. Rolla,<sup>a, b</sup> Andrew P. Cridland<sup>b</sup> and Andrew A. Gill<sup>a</sup>

a) Department of Chemistry, University of York, Heslington, York, YO10 5DD, UK.

b) School of Chemistry, University of Nottingham, University Park, Nottingham, NG7 2RD, UK.

## RECEIVED DATE

**Abstract.** An improved synthesis of (2*E*,4*Z*)-6-(benzyloxy)-4-bromohexa-2,4-dien-1-ol has been devised. This new route increases the through put and yield of the diene product by circumventing a low yielding preparation of a boronic acid intermediate as well as removing the need to use multi-gram quantities of highly toxic thallium salts. In the process of developing this new route, a higher yielding preparation of (*E*)-3-hydroxyprop-1-enylboronic acid was also achieved.

---

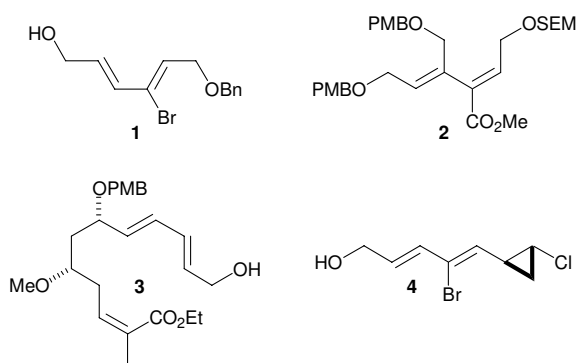
**Keywords:** Functionalised dienes, hexacyclenic acid, (*E*)-3-hydroxyprop-1-enylboronic acid, scaleable synthesis.

<sup>§</sup> Taken in part from the Ph.D. thesis of Andrew P. Cridland, University of Nottingham, 2007.

\* Corresponding author. Current address: Department of Chemistry, University of York, Heslington, York, YO10 5DD. Phone: +44 1904 432614. E-mail: [pac507@york.ac.uk](mailto:pac507@york.ac.uk).

## Introduction

The efficient synthesis of functionalized dienes with defined double bond geometries (Figure 1) is an important goal in organic synthesis,<sup>1</sup> as they are frequently used as intermediates in the construction of natural products. Such dienes are usually desired as precursors to Diels-Alder cyclisations, or as substrates for other stereocentre generating reactions like dihydroxylations and epoxidations. In all of these instances the geometries of the double bonds is of paramount importance, as it translates generally into the stereochemistry present in the product.

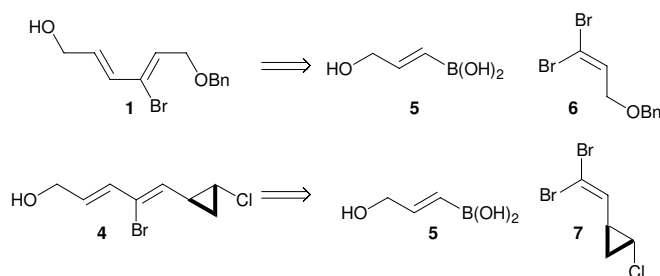


**Figure 1**

We and others have had cause to synthesise such dienes *en route* to a number of natural products. For example, several groups have reported strategies towards fragments of hexacyclenic acid<sup>2</sup> or the related FR182877<sup>3</sup> *via* Diels-Alder reactions of systems similar to those in Figure 1. We on the other hand, required significant quantities of diene **1** for our approach to the AB-rings of hexacyclenic acid.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, Nicolaou required diene **2** for his synthesis of zaragozic acid A,<sup>5</sup> while Roush needed triene **3** for the synthesis of the superstolides<sup>6</sup> and Evans synthesised diene **4** *en route* to the callipeltoside A side chain<sup>7</sup> (Figure 1).

In the cases of dienes **1**, **3** and **4** a synthetic strategy was adopted which involved formation of the diene's C2-C3 single bond, by use of a Suzuki reaction of a vinyl halide with boronic acid **5**<sup>4, 6, 7</sup> (Scheme 1). Roush has shown that regioselective cross-couplings are possible between boronic acids and 1,1-dibromoalkenes, since the rates of palladium(0) catalysed cross-coupling reactions of *E*-1-bromoalkenes are substantially greater than for those reactions with *Z*-1-bromoalkenes. Roush also

found that standard Suzuki cross-coupling conditions (cat.  $\text{Pd}(\text{PPh}_3)_4$ , aq.  $\text{NaOH}$ ,  $\text{PhH}$ , reflux) gave low yields, but the use of Kishi's modification (replacing  $\text{NaOH}$  with  $\text{TIOH}$ ) led to an increased rate of reaction, such that sluggish Suzuki couplings often reached completion rapidly when  $\text{TIOH}$  was used.<sup>8</sup> More recently, Roush demonstrated that the unstable  $\text{TIOH}$  can be substituted for  $\text{TIOEt}$  with retention of reactivity and selectivity.<sup>9</sup> The high yield and convergence of this coupling are attractive, and as such this was our preferred route to the **1**. While on paper this looks an attractive disconnection, in practice it suffers from a number of attributes which make it less desirable.

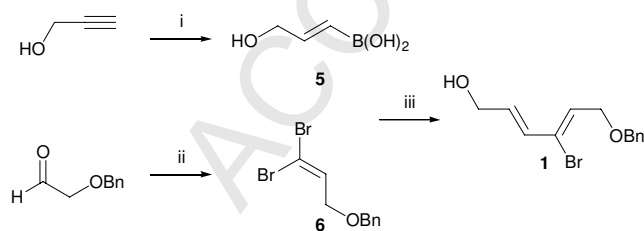


**Scheme 1**

## Results and Discussion

The two 3-carbon fragments required for the Suzuki strategy are both known compounds synthesised in one step from commercially available starting materials. 1,1-Dibromo-3-benzyloxyprop-1-ene **6** was produced in good yield from (benzyloxy)acetaldehyde using Corey–Fuchs methodology (Scheme 2).<sup>10</sup> However, the primary problem with this approach to the synthesis of **1** (Scheme 2) is the synthesis of boronic acid **5**, which was originally reported by Roush, although no experimental details were given in that or subsequent reports.<sup>6</sup> Our initial attempts at the hydroboration of propargyl alcohol were met with failure, but a more thorough experimental procedure, obtained *via* personal correspondence with the original author,<sup>11</sup> did permit its synthesis. The synthesis of **5** can be achieved by the slow addition of catecholborane to neat propargyl alcohol at 0 °C under argon to give the catecholborane ester. Hydrolysis with water produced a white foam which was saturated with  $\text{NaCl}$  and exhaustively extracted with  $\text{EtOAc}$  followed by flash column chromatography.<sup>11</sup> This generated **5** in an abysmal 7% yield. Removal of the extraction conditions and direct application of the aqueous mixture to flash silica

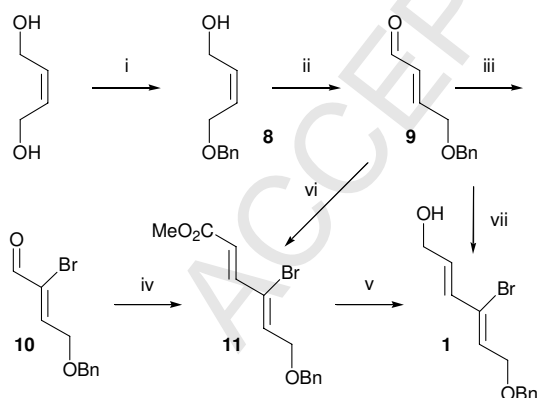
resulted in an increase in the isolated yield of **5** to 10-12%. However, it proved apparent that the extended purification times were detrimental to the yield of the product, and addressing this problem directly was difficult. In our highest yielding procedure two solvent systems were required for chromatography: EtOAc–petrol ether (40-60) (1:1) to remove the catechol, followed by CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>–MeOH (9:1) to remove the boronic acid **5**. On a large scale this resulted to the product being exposed to silica for up to four hours. It was reasoned that using a larger grain of silica could speed up the purification procedure and prevent excessive decomposition of the product. Thus, when the two-solvent system of chromatographic purification was run using Kieselgel 60 (0.2–0.5 mm) the chromatography time required was reduced and the yield of **5** increased to 25-30%.<sup>12</sup> The subsequent Suzuki reaction proceeded well and in 77% yield. However, this yield was only obtainable when Tl<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub> was used as the base in order to suppress formation of the triene by reaction of a further equivalent of **5** with the bromodiene **1**.<sup>3c</sup> Use of less toxic Ba(OH)<sub>2</sub><sup>13</sup> or Cs<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub> led to much longer reaction times and reduced yields of 37% and 39% respectively. Even Roush's reported conditions utilizing TlOEt<sup>9</sup> only delivered the product in 42% yield. However, as we desired to generate multi-gram quantities of **1** for our synthesis this required the use of large amounts of toxic Tl<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub>. For example generating 13 g of diene **1** necessitated the use of 50 g of Tl<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub>. This coupled with the crippling yields for the formation of **5** forced us to re-evaluate our synthesis. We now wish to disclose our improved synthesis of diene **1** which increased the overall yield of **1**, and removed the need to synthesise boronic acid **5** and the large quantities of highly toxic thallium salts.



**Scheme 2.** *Reagents and conditions:* (i) catecholborane, 25-30%; (ii) PPh<sub>3</sub>, CBr<sub>4</sub>, CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>, 0°C, 87%; (iii) 10 mol% Pd(PPh<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>, THF, water, Tl<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub>, 77%.



Our second generation synthesis of **1** (Scheme 3) began with the mono-benylation of *cis*-buten-1,4-diol with NaH, BnCl, *n*-Bu<sub>4</sub>NI in THF/DMSO in 78% yield.<sup>14</sup> Parikh-Doering oxidation generated aldehyde **9** quantitatively in which isomerisation of the double bond had taken place. Treatment of **9** with bromine followed by the addition of pyridine generated  $\alpha$ -bromoaldehyde **10** in 70% yield.<sup>15, 16</sup> Wittig olefination installed the second double bond as a single (*E*)-geometric isomer in a yield of 64%. Further enhancement of the yield of this oxidation-bromination-Wittig sequence could be achieved by the addition of (triphenylphosphoranylidene)acetate to the bromination reaction 1 hr after the addition of pyridine.<sup>15, 16</sup> This generated **11** in an improved yield of 70% over the bromination-Wittig steps. Reduction of ester **11** with DIBAL-H gave diene **1** in 92% yield. Spectroscopic analysis of **1** showed it to be identical to the compound produced by our procedure reported previously.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore we found that it was possible to telescope several of the steps in this second generation synthesis together. Bromination was achieved by the direct addition of bromine and pyridine to aldehyde **9**. This was followed by addition of the ylide for the Wittig reaction when the bromination was seen to be complete by analysis of an aliquot of the reaction mixture by <sup>1</sup>H NMR. Ester **11** was isolated from the reaction by precipitation of the triphenylphosphine oxide with Et<sub>2</sub>O-petrol ether (40-60) 3:1. Crude **11** was then treated with DIBAL-H and the resultant desired bromodiene **1** was isolated by filtration through a plug of silica in 64% yield over 3 steps.



**Scheme 3.** *Reagents and conditions:* (i) NaH, BnCl, *n*-Bu<sub>4</sub>NI, THF/DMSO, 60 °C, 78%; (ii) SO<sub>3</sub>.py, DIPEA, CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>, RT, 100%; (iii) Br<sub>2</sub>, 30 min, py, CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>, 0°C, 62%; (iv) MeO<sub>2</sub>CCHPPh<sub>3</sub>, CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>, 64%; (v) DIBAL-H/hexane, THF, -78°C, 92%; (vi) Br<sub>2</sub>, 30 min, py, CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>, 0°C, 1 h then

MeO<sub>2</sub>CCHPPh<sub>3</sub> 70% (2 steps); (vii) Br<sub>2</sub>, 30 min, py, CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>, 0°C, 1 h then MeO<sub>2</sub>CCHPPh<sub>3</sub>, DIBAL-H/hexane, THF, -78°C, 64% (3 steps).

## Conclusions

We have developed an improved procedure for the synthesis and isolation of boronic acid **5**, although for our purposes even this improved procedure was insufficient to solve our supply problem of diene **1**. Therefore we had to develop a second generation synthesis of **1**, which takes 5 steps and can provide over 50 g of **1**, without the use of toxic thallium salts. The improved second generation route provides **1** in an overall yield of 51% compared to our original synthesis which supplied it in only a 19% yield.

## Experimental

### General

All melting points are uncorrected. Reaction progress was monitored using glass-backed TLC plates pre-coated with silica UV<sub>254</sub> and visualized by using either UV radiation (254 nm), ceric ammonium molybdate or anisaldehyde stains. Column chromatography was performed using silica gel 60 (220-240 mesh), with the solvent systems indicated in the relevant experimental procedures. Dichloromethane was distilled from calcium hydride; tetrahydrofuran and diethyl ether were distilled from sodium / benzophenone ketyl, DMSO was distilled from calcium hydride prior to use. Hexane was distilled prior to use. All other reagents were used as received from commercial suppliers unless stated otherwise in the appropriate text.

### (2*E*,4*Z*)-6-(Benzyloxy)-4-bromohexa-2,4-dien-1-ol **1**

**Original synthesis coupling of boronic acid **5** and bromide **6**:** Nitrogen was bubbled through a solution of dibromoalkene **6** (18.1 g, 59.2 mmol) and boronic acid **5** (6.64 g, 65.2 mmol) in THF–water (3:1, 400 ml) at rt for 2 h. Under a flow of N<sub>2</sub>, Pd(PPh<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub> (3.42 g, 2.96 mmol) and Tl<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub> (50.0 g, 107 mmol) were added sequentially and the resulting green-brown solution with pale precipitate was stirred

at rt for 44 h. The suspension was added to a 1M aqueous solution of NaHSO<sub>4</sub> (150 ml) and then stirred until gas evolution ceased (1 h). The mixture was filtered through Celite, then extracted with EtOAc (2 × 150 ml). The combined organics were washed with brine (150 ml), dried (MgSO<sub>4</sub>), filtered and concentrated *in vacuo* to leave a crude brown oil (22.1 g, overweight). Flash chromatography (petrol ether (40-60)–EtOAc, 2:1) afforded an orange oil **1** (13.0 g, 77%).

**From ester 11:** A 1M solution of DIBAL-H (10.6 ml) in hexane was added to a solution of 6-benzyloxy-4-bromo-hexa-2,4-dienoic acid methyl ester (1.10 g, 3.54 mmol) in THF (15 ml). After 15 min the reaction was quenched with 10% solution of Rochelles' salt (15 ml) and stirred for 8 h. After extraction of the aqueous layer with EtOAc (3 x 15 ml) the combined organic layers were washed with brine (10 ml), 10% solution of Rochelles' salt (15 ml) and brine (10 ml); dried (MgSO<sub>4</sub>) and concentrated *in vacuo* to give a pale yellow oil (920 mg, 92%).

**The telescoped procedure:** To a solution of 4-benzyloxy-but-2-enal (50.76 g, 288 mmol) in CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> (600 ml) at 0°C was added bromine (15.6 ml, 302 mmol), the mixture was stirred for 15 min at 0 °C then treated with pyridine (93.2 ml, 1.15 mol) and stirred for a further 1 h at 0 °C. Methyl (triphenylphosphoranylidene)acetate (192.7 g, 576 mmol) was then added, and the reaction mixture was stirred for 24 h at rt and concentrated *in vacuo*. The bulk of triphenylphosphineoxide was removed by trituration of the crude solid with Et<sub>2</sub>O-petroleum ether (40-60) 3:1 followed by filtration and concentrated *in vacuo* which gave a brown solid. The brown solid was then triturated with hot petroleum ether (40-60), filtered and concentrated *in vacuo* which gave a brown solid (84.9 g, crude). A 1M solution of DIBAL-H (543 ml) in hexane was added to a solution of crude 6-benzyloxy-4-bromo-hexa-2,4-dienoic acid methyl ester (84.9 g) in THF (1.1 l) over 2 h. After 30 minutes the reaction was diluted with EtOAc (1 l), quenched with 10% solution of Rochelles' salt (1 l) and stirred for 8 h. The organic layer was washed with 10% Rochelles' salt (2 x 400 ml) and brine (200 ml). The aqueous layer was extracted with EtOAc (3 x 1 l) and the combined organic layers were washed with 10% Rochelles' salt (2 x 400 ml) and brine (400 ml). The combined organic layers were dried (MgSO<sub>4</sub>) concentrated *in*

*vacuo* and subjected to filtration over a plug of silica to give a pale yellow oil (51.4 g, 63% over 4 steps).

$\nu_{\max}$  (solution;  $\text{CHCl}_3$ ) 3616, 2922, 2863, 1651, 1614, 1454, 1088  $\text{cm}^{-1}$ ;  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ) 7.37–7.27 (5H, m, Ph), 6.31 (1H, d,  $J=15.0$  Hz, H3), 6.25 (1H, dt,  $J=15.0$  and 5.0 Hz, H2), 6.19 (1H, t,  $J=6.0$  Hz, 5-H), 4.54 (2H, s, H7), 4.31 (4H, apparent d,  $J=5.0$  Hz, H1 and H6);  $\delta_{\text{C}}$  (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ) 137.9 (C, Ph), 134.2 (CH, C2), 130.8 (CH, C5), 128.9 (CH, C3), 128.4 (CH, Ph), 127.8 (CH, Ph), 127.8 (CH, Ph), 125.1 (C, C4), 72.7 ( $\text{CH}_2$ , C7), 69.6 ( $\text{CH}_2$ , C6), 62.4 ( $\text{CH}_2$ , C1);  $m/z$  (CI) 302 and 300 (1:1,  $[\text{M} + \text{NH}_4]^+$ ), 286 and 284 (1:1,  $[\text{M} + \text{H}]^+$ ), 204 ( $\text{M} + \text{H} - \text{Br}$ )<sup>+</sup>; found  $\text{M} + \text{NH}_4$  300.0594,  $\text{C}_{13}\text{H}_{19}^{79}\text{BrNO}_2$  requires  $\text{M} + \text{NH}_4$  300.0594.

### **(E)-3-Hydroxyprop-1-enylboronic acid 5**

Catecholborane (113 ml, 833 mol) was added to neat propargyl alcohol (23.6 ml, 407 mmol) at 0 °C under  $\text{N}_2$  at a rate of 2 ml  $\text{min}^{-1}$  (CARE: gas evolution) with vigorous stirring. The clear solution was allowed to warm to rt over 1 h during which time it solidified (CARE: exotherm). The solid was held at rt for 20 h. Water ( $5 \times 10$  ml) was added at 1 h intervals (CARE: gas evolution) and the mixture allowed to stir for 24 h. The solid did not dissolve completely, so water (20 ml) was added and the mixture stirred for a further 24 h. The resulting white foam was added directly to a column of silica (~750 g; Kieselgel 60 (0.2–0.5 mm)). Elution with EtOAc–petroleum ether (40–60) (1:1, 5 l) removed the catechol byproduct, then MeOH (5–15%) in  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  removed the product. Concentration *in vacuo* left a light-brown foam **5** (16.6 g, 40%).  $\nu_{\max}$  (nujol) 3375, 1642, 1334, 1197, 1085, 1001, 916, 775, 737  $\text{cm}^{-1}$ .  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  (400 MHz,  $\text{CD}_3\text{OD}$ ) 6.57 (1H, dt,  $J=18.0$  and 4.0 Hz, H2), 5.81 (1H, dt,  $J=18.0$  and 2.0 Hz, H1), 4.11 (2H, dd,  $J=4.0$  and 2.0 Hz, H3).  $\delta_{\text{C}}$  (125 MHz,  $\text{CD}_3\text{OD}$ ) 153.1 (CH, C2), 66.2 ( $\text{CH}_2$ , C3) ppm. MS  $m/z$  (ES-) 100 and 101 (1:4,  $[\text{M}-\text{H}]^-$ ); found (EI-)  $\text{M} - \text{H}$ , 101.0405  $\text{C}_3\text{H}_7\text{O}_3\text{B}$  requires  $\text{M} - \text{H}$  101.0405.

### **3-(Benzyloxy)-1,1-dibromoprop-1-ene 6**

To a solution of  $\text{PPh}_3$  (26.5 g, 101 mmol) in  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  (150 ml) at 0 °C under Ar was added a solution of  $\text{CBr}_4$  (14.6 g, 43.9 mmol) in  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  (50 ml) at a rate of 1 ml  $\text{min}^{-1}$ , and the resulting red solution was stirred at 0 °C for 1 h. A solution of benzyloxyacetaldehyde (5.06 g, 33.7 mmol) in  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  (100 ml) was added at a rate of 1 ml  $\text{min}^{-1}$  then the solution was stirred at 0 °C warming to rt over 1 h, and at rt for a further 13 h. A saturated aqueous solution of  $\text{NH}_4\text{Cl}$  (150 ml) was added, the organic layers were separated and washed with water (150 ml) and the combined aqueous layers were extracted with  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  ( $3 \times 100$  ml). The combined organics were washed with brine (200 ml), dried ( $\text{MgSO}_4$ ), filtered and concentrated *in vacuo* to give a yellow solid. Hexane (250 ml) was added and the suspension stirred for 14 h. The solvent was decanted, then hexane (100 ml) added to the residue, and the suspension treated with sonication for 30 min. The suspension was filtered, and the combined organics concentrated *in vacuo* to leave a pale yellow oil **6** (9.03 g, 87%).  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  (270 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ) 7.37–7.30 (5H, m, Ph), 6.65 (1H, t,  $J = 6.0$  Hz, H2), 4.53 (2H, s, H4), 4.06 (2H, d,  $J = 6.0$  Hz, H3). Data in agreement with the literature.<sup>17</sup>

#### 4-Benzyloxy-but-2-en-1-ol **8**

Neat *cis*-butendiol (15 g, 170 mmol) was added to a suspension of NaH, 60% dispersion in oil, (7.5 g, 187 mmol) in 4:1 THF-DMSO (375 ml) and stirred at 0°C. After 30 min a solution of benzyl chloride (20.5 g, 162 mmol) in THF (200 ml) was added over 15 min followed by the addition of *n*- $\text{Bu}_4\text{NI}$  (6.3 g, 17 mmol). The reaction mixture was stirred at 60 °C for 12 h, cooled to rt, diluted with water (700 ml) and extracted with  $\text{Et}_2\text{O}$  ( $3 \times 700$  ml). The combined organic layers were washed with brine (200 ml), dried ( $\text{MgSO}_4$ ) and concentrated *in vacuo*. Distillation at 0.2 mbar, 110 °C gave a colourless oil (22.5 g, 78%).  $\nu_{\text{max}}$  (film) 3386, 3028, 2923, 2861, 1454, 1387, 1207, 1071, 1028, 738, 699  $\text{cm}^{-1}$ .  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  (400 MHz;  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ) 7.38-7.28 (5H, m, Ph), 5.75 (1H, m, H2), 5.73 (1H, m, H3), 5.53 (2H, s, H5), 4.19 (2H, t,  $J = 5.7$  Hz, H1), 4.11 (2H, dd,  $J = 6.1, 0.6$  Hz, H4), 1.78 (1H, t,  $J = 5.7$  Hz, OH) ppm.  $\delta_{\text{C}}$  (100 MHz;  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ) 137.7 (C, Ph), 132.4 (CH, C2), 128.4 (CH, C3), 128.0 (CH, Ph), 127.8 (CH, Ph), 127.7 (CH,

Ph), 72.4 (CH<sub>2</sub>, C5), 65.5 (CH<sub>2</sub>, C4), 58.5 (CH<sub>2</sub>, C1) ppm. MS (ES<sup>+</sup>)  $m/z$  201 (M + Na)<sup>+</sup>, 179 (M + H)<sup>+</sup> and 161 (M + H – H<sub>2</sub>O)<sup>+</sup>; found M + H 179.1067, C<sub>11</sub>H<sub>15</sub>O<sub>2</sub> requires M + H 179.1072.

#### 4-Benzyloxy-but-2-enal 9

To a solution of 4-benzyloxy-but-2-en-1-ol (22.5 g, 126 mmol) in CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> (240 ml) was added DMSO (45 ml) followed by DIPEA (55 ml, 316 mmol). To this mixture SO<sub>3</sub>Py (40.2 g, 253 mmol) was added over 10 min in 5 portions. The reaction mixture was stirred for 1 h at rt, diluted with CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> (300 ml), washed with 0.5M HCl (3 x 150 ml), brine (2 x 100 ml) then dried (MgSO<sub>4</sub>) and concentrated *in vacuo* to give a orange oil (22.2 g, >99%).  $\nu_{\max}$  (film) 3064, 3031, 2844, 2730, 1690, 1468, 1361, 1113, 1026, 968, 739, 699 cm<sup>-1</sup>.  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  (400 MHz; CDCl<sub>3</sub>) 9.59 (1H, d,  $J$  = 8.0 Hz, H1), 7.39-7.30 (1H, m, Ph), 6.85 (1H, dt,  $J$  = 15.8, 4.1 Hz, H3), 6.41 (1H, ddt,  $J$  = 15.8, 8.0, 1.9, H2), 4.60 (2H, s, H5), 4.29 (2H, dd,  $J$  = 4.1, 1.9 Hz, H4) ppm.  $\delta_{\text{C}}$  (100 MHz; CDCl<sub>3</sub>) 193.3 (CH, C1), 153.0 (CH, C3), 137.4 (C, Ph), 131.8 (CH, C2), 128.5 (CH, Ph), 127.9 (CH, Ph), 127.6 (CH, Ph), 73.0 (CH<sub>2</sub>, C5), 68.5 (CH<sub>2</sub>, C4) ppm. MS (ESI)  $m/z$  199 (M+Na)<sup>+</sup>, 177 (M + H)<sup>+</sup> and 159 (M + H – H<sub>2</sub>O)<sup>+</sup>; found M + H 177.0910, C<sub>11</sub>H<sub>13</sub>O<sub>2</sub> requires M + H 177.0916.

#### 4-Benzyloxy-2-bromo-but-2-enal 10

To a solution of 4-benzyloxy-but-2-enal (23.2 g, 132 mmol) in CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> (250 ml) was added bromine (7.15 ml, 139 mmol), the mixture was stirred for 10 min at rt and then cooled at 0°C, treated with pyridine (42 ml, 528 mmol) and stirred for a further 30 min at 0 °C. The reaction mixture was diluted with Et<sub>2</sub>O (700 ml) then washed with 0.5M HCl (5 x 150 ml), brine (2 x 100 ml) and dried (MgSO<sub>4</sub>). Concentration *in vacuo* gave a brown oil (20.8 g, 62%).  $\nu_{\max}$  (film) 3063, 3030, 2860, 1701, 1628, 1454, 1349, 1138, 1110, 741, 699 cm<sup>-1</sup>.  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  (400 MHz; CDCl<sub>3</sub>) 9.19 (1H, s, H1), 7.40-7.32 (5H, m, Ph), 7.33 (1H, t,  $J$  = 5.0 Hz, H3), 4.61 (2H, s, H5), 4.45 (2H, d,  $J$  = 5.0 Hz, H4) ppm.  $\delta_{\text{C}}$  (100 MHz; CDCl<sub>3</sub>) 185.0

(CH, C1), 151.9 (CH, C3), 137.0 (C, Ph), 128.6 (CH, Ph), 128.1 (CH, Ph), 127.9 (CH, Ph), 126.7 (C, C2), 73.4 (CH<sub>2</sub>, C5), 69.4 (CH<sub>2</sub>, C4) ppm. MS (CI)  $m/z$  274, 272 (1:1 [M + H<sub>2</sub>O]<sup>+</sup>); found (ES+) M + Na 276.9835, C<sub>11</sub>H<sub>11</sub><sup>79</sup>BrNaO<sub>2</sub> requires M + Na 276.9040.

### 6-Benzyloxy-4-bromo-hexa-2,4-dienoic acid methyl ester 11

To a solution of 4-benzyloxy-2-bromo-but-2-enal (972 mg, 3.81 mmol) in CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> (1.5 ml) methyl (triphenylphosphoranylidene)acetate (2.55 g, 7.63 mmol) was added. The reaction mixture was stirred for 10 h at rt and concentrated *in vacuo*. Column chromatography (petroleum ether (40-60) -Et<sub>2</sub>O 5:1) gave a light yellow semi solid (755 mg, 64%).

**The telescoped procedure:** To a solution of 4-benzyloxy-but-2-enal (577 mg, 3.27 mmol) in CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> (6.5 ml) was added bromine (0.177 ml, 3.44 mmol), the mixture was stirred for 10 min at rt and then cooled at 0°C, pyridine (1.1 ml, 13.1 mmol) was then added and the mixture was stirred for 1 h. Methyl (triphenylphosphoranylidene)acetate (2.19 g, 6.55 mmol) was added after this time and the reaction mixture was stirred for a further 24 h at rt and then concentrated *in vacuo*. The bulk of triphenylphosphine oxide was removed triturating the crude solid with hot petroleum ether (40-60) and decanting the solution away from the residue. Concentration of the decanted petroleum ether under reduced pressure gave an orange oil. Column chromatography (petroleum ether (40-60)-Et<sub>2</sub>O 5:1) gave a light yellow semi solid (710 mg, 70% over three steps).

$\nu_{\max}$  (film) 2950, 1717, 1635, 1456, 1436, 1307, 1154, 1105, 734, 698 cm<sup>-1</sup>.  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  (400 MHz; CDCl<sub>3</sub>) 7.39-7.29 (5H, m, Ph), 7.28 (1H, dd,  $J$  = 14.8, 0.7 Hz, H3), 6.57 (1H, tt,  $J$  = 5.5, 0.7 Hz, H5), 6.25 (1H, dd,  $J$  = 14.8, 0.7 Hz, H2), 4.55 (2H, s, benzylic CH<sub>2</sub>), 4.33 (2H, d,  $J$  = 5.5 Hz, H6), 3.78 (3H, s, CH<sub>3</sub>) ppm.  $\delta_{\text{C}}$  (100 MHz; CDCl<sub>3</sub>) 166.6 (C, C1), 142.4 (CH, C3), 139.3 (CH, C5), 137.4 (C, Ph), 128.5 (CH, Ph), 127.9 (CH, Ph), 127.8 (CH, Ph), 122.9 (CH, C2), 122.5 (C, C4), 73.0 (CH<sub>2</sub>, C7), 69.7 (CH<sub>2</sub>, C6), 51.8 (CH<sub>3</sub>, C11) ppm. MS (ES+)  $m/z$  335 and 333 (1:1, [M + Na]<sup>+</sup>), 313, 311 (1:1, [M + H]<sup>+</sup>); found M + H 311.0277, C<sub>14</sub>H<sub>16</sub><sup>79</sup>BrO<sub>3</sub> requires M + H 311.0283.

## Acknowledgments

We thank the EPSRC (GR/S77301/01) and Merck, Sharp and Dohme for studentship funding (GR), the EPSRC/University of Nottingham for award of a DTA (APC) and AstraZeneca for an unrestricted research award (PAC).

## References and Notes.

- (1) Metha, G.; Rao, H. S. P., *The Chemistry of Dienes and Polyenes*: Volume 1, Ed: Rappoport Z., John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, **1997**, Ch 9, pp 359.
- (2) Stellfeld, T.; Bhatt, U.; Kalesse, M. *Org. Lett.*, **2004**, 6, 3889.
- (3) a) Suzuki, T.; Nakada, M. *Tetrahedron Lett.*, **2002**, 43, 3263. b) Vanderwal, C. D.; Vosburg, D. A.; Weiler, S.; Sorensen, E. J. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.*, **2003**, 125, 5393. c) Evans, D. A.; Starr, J. T. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.*, **2003**, 125, 13531. d) Methot, J. L.; Roush, W. R. *Org. Lett.*, **2003**, 5, 4223. e) Clarke, P. A.; Davie, R. L.; Peace, S. *Tetrahedron* **2005**, 61, 2335.
- (4) Clarke, P. A.; Cridland, A. P. *Org. Lett.*, **2005**, 7, 4221.
- (5) Nicolaou, K. C.; Yue, E. W.; La Greca, S.; Nadin, A.; Yang, Z.; Leresche, J. E.; Tssuri, T.; Naniwa, Y.; De Riccardis, F. *Chem. Eur. J.*, **1995**, 1, 467.
- (6) Roush, W. R. ; Champoux, J. A. ; Peterson, B. C. *Tetrahedron Lett.*, **1996**, 37, 8989.
- (7) Evans, D. A.; Burch, J. D. *Org. Lett.*, **2001**, 3, 503.
- (8) Uenishi, J.; Beau, J.-M.; Armstrong, R. W.; Kishi, Y. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.*, **1987**, 109, 4756.
- (9) Frank, S. A.; Chen, H.; Kunz, R. K.; Schnaderbeck, M. J.; Roush, W. R. *Org. Lett.*, **2000**, 2, 2691.
- (10) Corey E. J.; Fuchs, P. L. *Tetrahedron Lett.*, **1972**, 13, 3769.
- (11) Roush, W. R. *Personal communication*.
- (12) On one occasion a yield of 40% was obtained.
- (13) Baldwin, J. E.; Chesworth, R.; Parker, J. S.; Russell A. T. *Tetrahedron Lett.*, **1995**, 36, 9551.



- (14) Modification of: Pollex, A.; Millet, A.; Muller, J.; Hiersemann, M.; Abraham, L. *J. Org. Chem.*, **2005**, 70, 5579.
- (15) Roush, W. R.; Kageyama, M. *Tetrahedron Lett.*, **1985**, 26, 4327.
- (16) Roush, W. R.; Kageyama, M.; Riva, R.; Brown, B. B.; Warmus, J. S.; Moriarty, K. *J. Org. Chem.*, **1991**, 56, 1192.
- (17) Sauer, D. R.; Schneller, S. W.; Gabrielsen, B. *Carbohydr. Res.*, **1993**, 241, 71.

ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT