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**Preprint Title** Undescribed triterpenoids obtained from *Dictamnus dasycarpus* Turcz and their anti-proliferation activities

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1 **Undescribed triterpenoids obtained from *Dictamnus dasycarpus***

2 **Turcz and their anti-proliferation activities**

3

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13

14 **ABSTRACT**

15 Three new triterpenoids, named dictamtriterpenol B-D (**1-3**), along with ten known  
16 compounds (**4-13**), were isolated from *Dictamnus dasycarpus* Turcz. The structures of all  
17 compounds were characterized by spectroscopic methods, including IR, HR-ESI-MS, 1D and 2D  
18 NMR. Furthermore, HepG2 and A549 cell lines were used to evaluate their anti-proliferation  
19 activities. And compounds **1**, **5**, and **8** (IC<sub>50</sub> values in the range of 1.84±0.03 to 14.98±0.39 μM)  
20 displayed significant anti-proliferation activity against HepG2 cells. As well as compounds **1**, **4**, **9**,  
21 **10**, and **13** (IC<sub>50</sub> values in the range of 1.63±0.04 to 8.56±1.46 μM) displayed significant  
22 anti-proliferation activity against A549 cells.

23 **Keywords**

24 *Dictamnus dasycarpus* Turcz; Triterpenoids; Anti-proliferation

25

## 26 **Introduction**

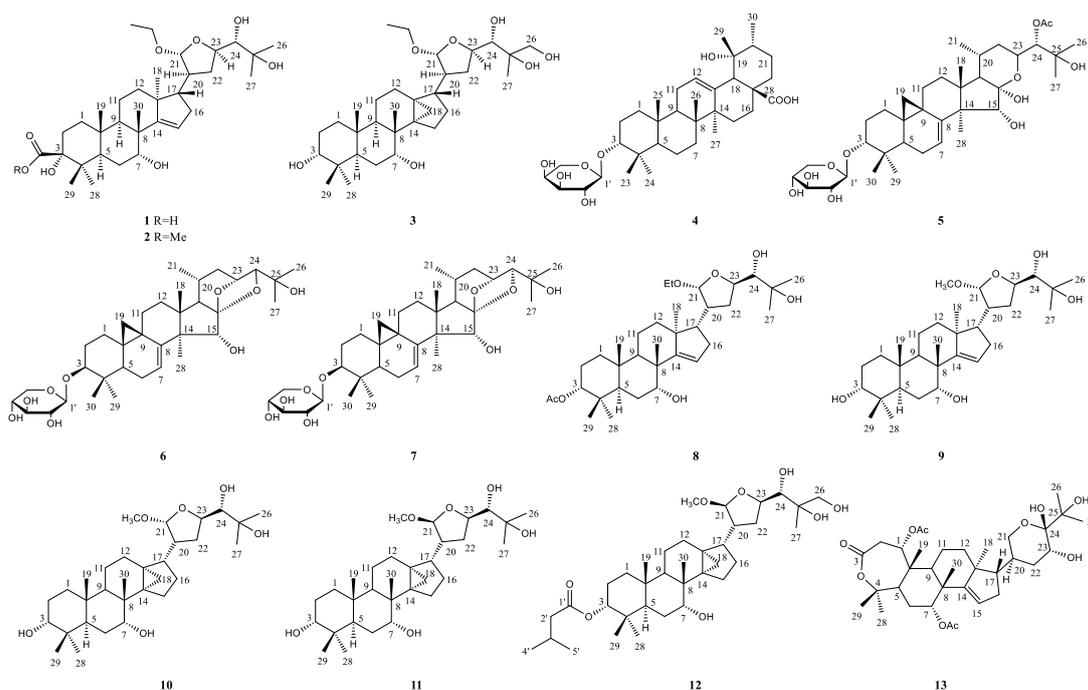
27 *Dictamnus dasycarpus* Turcz was widely distributed in the Heilongjiang Province of China.  
28 As a traditional Chinese medicine “Baixianpi”, the root bark of *D. dasycarpus* was used for the  
29 treatment of cancer, infection, eczema, and so on [1]. As well as *D. dasycarpus* showed a variety  
30 of significant anti-inflammatory, anti-cancer, and antioxidant activities [2-4]. Meanwhile, the  
31 phytochemical studies of *D. dasycarpus* have revealed the presence of limonoids, alkaloids,  
32 sesquiterpenes, flavonoids, and triterpenoids [5-7]. Thus, to discover the bioactive constituents of  
33 *D. dasycarpus*, a systematic and in-depth phytochemical study was carried out.

34 Three new triterpenoids (**1-3**) and ten (**4-13**) known compounds were obtained and identified  
35 in this study. The structures of the above compounds were determined by the results of many  
36 spectroscopic techniques. Meanwhile, all compounds were tested the anti-proliferation activities  
37 against HepG2 and A549 cancer cell lines by CCK-8 assay.

38

## 39 Results and Discussion

40 The root bark of *D. dasycarpus* was extracted with 70% EtOH. The extract was partitioned  
41 with EtOAc. And the EtOAc layer was separated by several methods, such as silicagel column,  
42 ODS, and preparative HPLC purification, to obtain pure compounds. Including three new  
43 triterpenoids (**1-3**) and ten known compounds were obtained. The known compounds were  
44 identified as 3-O- $\alpha$ -L-arabinopyranosyl pomolic acid (**4**) [8], 24-epi-24-O-acetyl-7,8-  
45 didehydrohydroshengmanol3-O- $\beta$ -D-xylopyranoside (**5**) [9], 24(S),7,8-didehydrocimigenol-3-O-  
46 - $\beta$ -D-xylopyranoside (**6**) [9], 24-epi-7,8-didehydrocimigenol-3-xyloside (**7**) [10], chisopanin G (**8**)  
47 [11], 21-O-methyltoosendanpentol (**9**) [12], agladupol A-c (**10**) [12], agladupol A-b (**11**) [12],  
48 dictamtriterpenol A (**12**) [13], and polystanin E (**13**) [14] (Fig. 1). Their  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR data were  
49 summarised in Tab. S1.



50

51

**Fig. 1.** The structures of compounds **1-13**

52

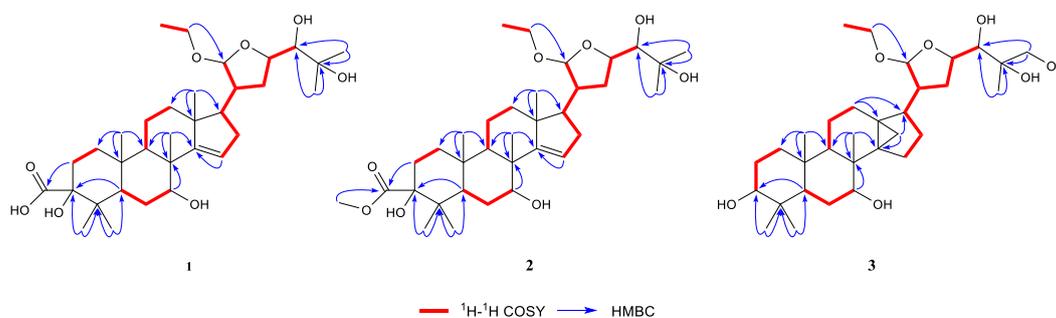
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Compound **1** was extracted as a white amorphous powder. The HR-ESI-MS (Fig. S1-8) gave  
an obvious  $[\text{M}+\text{Na}]^+$  ion peak at  $m/z$  601.3705 (calcd for 601.3711). Its molecular formula was  
predicted to be  $\text{C}_{33}\text{H}_{54}\text{O}_8$ . The  $^1\text{H}$  NMR data (Tab.1) of compound **1** exhibited signals for seven  
methyl singlets at  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  1.27/1.25/1.25/1.20/1.09/1.08/1.07, one ethoxyl at  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  3.74/3.46 (each 1H, m),

56 and 1.20 (3H, s), four oxymethines at  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  4.92 (1H, d,  $J = 3.8$  Hz, H-21), 4.26 (1H, m, H-23), 3.87  
 57 (1H, br.s, H-7), 3.22 (1H, br.s, H-24), as well as an olefinic proton at  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  5.40 (1H, br.s, H-15). In  
 58 the  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR data (Tab. 1) and DEPT-135 (Fig. S1-3), compound **1** displayed 33 carbons,  
 59 including eight methyls, eight methylenes, ten methines, and seven quaternary carbons. All the  
 60 data above indicated that compound **1** was a triterpenoid. And the structure was similar to  
 61 toonasinensin A [15]. The difference was the C-3 of compound **1** was replaced by a carboxyl  
 62 group. The long-range correlations from H-2 to the -COOH in the HMBC spectrum (Fig. S1-6)  
 63 further confirmed the above structure of compound **1** (Fig. 2).



64  
 65 **Fig. 2.** Key HMBC and  $^1\text{H}$ - $^1\text{H}$  COSY correlations of compounds **1-3**.

66 The relative configurations of compound **1** were established by the analysis of NOESY  
 67 spectrum (Fig. S1-7). The correlations (Fig. 3) of H-6 $\beta$ /H<sub>3</sub>-29, H-6 $\beta$ /H<sub>3</sub>-19, H-6 $\beta$ /H<sub>3</sub>-30,  
 68 H<sub>3</sub>-30/H-7, H<sub>3</sub>-30/H-12 $\beta$ , and H-12 $\beta$ /H-17, assigned the  $\beta$ -oriented H-7, H-17, H<sub>3</sub>-19, H<sub>3</sub>-29, and  
 69 H<sub>3</sub>-30. The correlations between H-5/H<sub>3</sub>-28, H-5/H-9, and H-9/H<sub>3</sub>-18 concluded the  $\alpha$ -oriented  
 70 H-5, H-9, and H<sub>3</sub>-18. Its negative specific rotation  $[[\alpha]_D^{20} = -79.1, (c = 0.1, \text{MeOH})]$  and NMR data  
 71 were similar to those of (3 $\alpha$ ,7 $\alpha$ ,13 $\alpha$ ,17 $\alpha$ ,20S,21R,23R,24S)-3-(3-methylbutanoate)-21,23-epoxy-  
 72 21-methoxy-13,30-cyclodammarane-3,7,24,25-tetrol [16]. Then, the structure of dictamtriterpenol  
 73 B (**1**) was elucidated.

74

**Table 1**  $^1\text{H}$  and  $^{13}\text{C}$ -NMR Data of **1-3** (600 MHz in  $^1\text{H}$  NMR and 150MHz in  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR, in  $\text{CD}_3\text{OD}$ )

No	1		2		3	
	$\delta_{\text{C}}$	$\delta_{\text{H}}$ ( <i>J</i> in Hz)	$\delta_{\text{C}}$	$\delta_{\text{H}}$ ( <i>J</i> in Hz)	$\delta_{\text{C}}$	$\delta_{\text{H}}$ ( <i>J</i> in Hz)
1	35.7	2.35 (1H, <i>m</i> ) 1.62 (1H, <i>m</i> )	35.6	2.36 (1H, <i>m</i> ) 1.61 (1H, <i>m</i> )	34.4	1.31 (2H, <i>m</i> )
2	30.1	2.57 (1H, <i>m</i> ) 2.12 (1H, <i>m</i> )	29.8	2.61 (1H, <i>m</i> ) 2.14 (1H, <i>m</i> )	27.5	1.63 (1H, <i>m</i> ) 0.96 (1H, <i>m</i> )
3	76.1		76.0		77.0	3.32 (1H, <i>br.s</i> )
4	44.7		44.7		37.8	
5	44.6	2.00 (1H, <i>m</i> )	44.7	1.98 (1H, <i>m</i> )	41.1	1.96 (1H, <i>m</i> )
6	29.0	1.90 (1H, <i>m</i> ) 1.76 (1H, <i>m</i> )	29.0	1.89 (1H, <i>m</i> ) 1.75 (1H, <i>m</i> )	26.0	1.64 (1H, <i>m</i> ) 1.56 (1H, <i>m</i> )
7	73.5	3.87 (1H, <i>br.s</i> )	73.5	3.87 (1H, <i>br.s</i> )	75.8	3.70 (1H, <i>br.s</i> )
8	44.7		44.7		40.4	
9	34.8	2.16 (1H, <i>m</i> )	34.9	2.14 (1H, <i>m</i> )	45.4	1.39 (1H, <i>m</i> )
10	42.6		42.6		38.1	
11	17.3	1.65 (1H, <i>m</i> ) 1.58 (1H, <i>m</i> )	17.3	1.62 (1H, <i>m</i> ) 1.58 (1H, <i>m</i> )	17.5	1.33 (2H, <i>m</i> )
12	34.7	1.87 (1H, <i>m</i> ) 1.49 (1H, <i>m</i> )	34.7	1.86 (1H, <i>m</i> ) 1.49 (1H, <i>m</i> )	26.8	1.88 (1H, <i>m</i> ) 1.57 (1H, <i>m</i> )
13	48.0		48.0		29.6	
14	162.6		162.5		38.5	
15	120.0	5.40 (1H, <i>br.s</i> )	120.0	5.40 (1H, <i>br.s</i> )	27.2	1.85 (2H, <i>m</i> )
16	36.0	2.16 (1H, <i>m</i> ) 1.64 (1H, <i>m</i> )	36.0	2.16 (1H, <i>m</i> ) 1.64 (1H, <i>m</i> )	26.2	1.96 (1H, <i>m</i> ) 1.51 (1H, <i>m</i> )
17	59.3	1.71 (1H, <i>m</i> )	59.3	1.71 (1H, <i>m</i> )	49.9	1.97 (1H, <i>m</i> )
18	19.5	1.08 (3H, <i>s</i> )	19.5	1.06 (3H, <i>s</i> )	15.0	0.72 (1H, <i>d</i> , <i>J</i> =5.5) 0.50 (1H, <i>d</i> , <i>J</i> =5.5)
19	20.5	1.07 (3H, <i>s</i> )	20.5	1.06 (3H, <i>s</i> )	16.3	0.91 (3H, <i>s</i> )
20	47.5	2.33 (1H, <i>m</i> )	47.5	2.32 (1H, <i>m</i> )	50.5	2.05 (1H, <i>m</i> )
21	109.7	4.92 (1H, <i>d</i> , <i>J</i> =3.8)	109.7	4.92 (1H, <i>d</i> , <i>J</i> =3.8)	109.5	4.98 (1H, <i>d</i> , <i>J</i> =4.1)
22	36.1	1.94 (1H, <i>m</i> ) 1.66 (1H, <i>m</i> )	36.1	1.93 (1H, <i>m</i> ) 1.65 (1H, <i>m</i> )	34.3	1.89 (1H, <i>m</i> ) 1.68 (1H, <i>m</i> )
23	77.2	4.26 (1H, <i>m</i> )	77.2	4.26 (1H, <i>m</i> )	77.2	4.28 (1H, <i>m</i> )
24	78.5	3.22 (1H, <i>br.s</i> )	78.5	3.22 (1H, <i>br.s</i> )	75.2	3.44 (1H, <i>br.s</i> )
25	73.9		73.9		75.6	
26	27.5	1.25 (3H, <i>s</i> )	27.5	1.25 (3H, <i>s</i> )	68.9	3.56 (1H, <i>d</i> , <i>J</i> =11.1) 3.47 (1H, <i>d</i> , <i>J</i> =11.1)
27	25.3	1.20 (3H, <i>s</i> )	25.3	1.20 (3H, <i>s</i> )	20.0	1.16 (3H, <i>s</i> )
28	28.3	1.25 (3H, <i>s</i> )	28.3	1.24 (3H, <i>s</i> )	28.8	0.90 (3H, <i>s</i> )
29	32.9	1.27 (3H, <i>s</i> )	33.0	1.26 (3H, <i>s</i> )	22.8	0.83 (3H, <i>s</i> )
30	28.0	1.09 (3H, <i>s</i> )	28.0	1.08 (3H, <i>s</i> )	20.3	1.04 (3H, <i>s</i> )
<b>3-COOH</b>	179.2		177.2			
<b>COOCH<sub>3</sub></b>			52.1	3.64 (3H, <i>s</i> )		
<b>OEt</b>	64.8	3.74 (1H, <i>m</i> ) 3.46 (1H, <i>m</i> )	64.8	3.75 (1H, <i>m</i> ) 3.46 (1H, <i>m</i> )	64.9	3.74 (1H, <i>m</i> ) 3.45 (1H, <i>m</i> )
<b>OEt</b>	15.8	1.20 (3H, <i>s</i> )	15.8	1.20 (3H, <i>s</i> )	15.7	1.19 (3H, <i>t</i> , <i>J</i> =7.1)

76 Compound **2** was extracted as a white amorphous powder. The HR-ESI-MS (Fig. S2-8) gave  
77 an obvious  $[M+NH_4]^+$  ion peak at  $m/z$  610.4318 (calcd for 610.4313), and its molecular formula  
78 was predicted to be  $C_{34}H_{56}O_8$ . The  $^1H$  NMR and  $^{13}C$  NMR data were similar to compound **1**. The  
79 only difference was the  $-COOCH_3$  group on C-2. The long-range correlations from  $\delta_H$  3.64 (3H, s)  
80 to the  $\delta_C$  177.2 in the HMBC spectrum (Fig. S2-6) further confirmed the above structure of  
81 compound **2** (Fig. 2). As well as the configurations of compound **2** were similar to compound **1**.  
82 Then, the structure of dictamtriterpenol C (**2**) was elucidated.

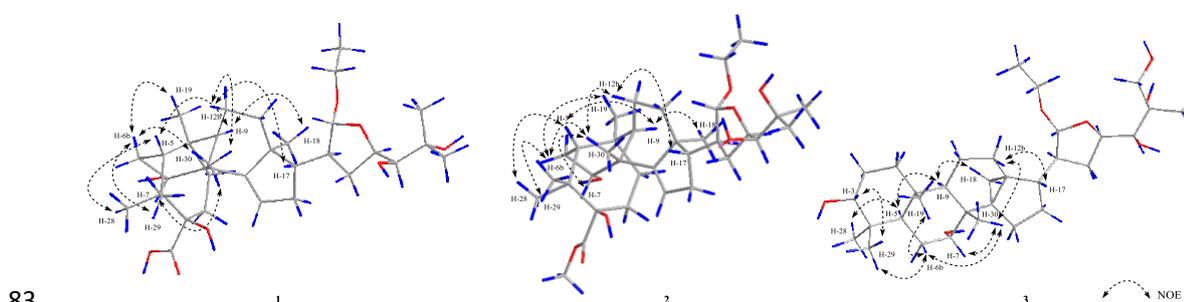


Fig. 3. Key NOESY correlations of compounds **1-3**.

85 Compound **3** was extracted as a white amorphous powder. The HR-ESI-MS (Fig. S3-8) gave  
86 an obvious  $[M+K]^+$  ion peak at  $m/z$  589.3522 (calcd for 589.3507), and its molecular formula was  
87 predicted to be  $C_{32}H_{54}O_7$ . The  $^1H$  NMR data (Tab.1) of compound **3** exhibited signals for five  
88 methyl singlets at  $\delta_H$  1.16/1.04/0.91/0.90/0.83, one ethoxyl at  $\delta_H$  3.74/3.45 (each 1H, m), and 1.19  
89 (3H, t,  $J = 7.1$ ), five oxymethines at  $\delta_H$  4.98 (1H, d,  $J = 4.1$  Hz, H-21), 4.28 (1H, m, H-23), 3.70  
90 (1H, br.s, H-7), 3.44 (1H, br.s, H-24), 3.32 (1H, br.s, H-3). In the  $^{13}C$  NMR data (Tab. 1) and  
91 DEPT-135 (Fig. S3-3), compound **3** displayed 32 carbons, including six methyls, eleven  
92 methylenes, nine methines, and six quaternary carbons. The structure of compound **3** was similar  
93 to dictamtriterpenol A [4]. The difference was the substituent of C-2 of compound **3** was a  
94 hydroxyl group, and there was an ethoxyl group on C-25. The long-range correlations from H-26

95 to C-25 in the HMBC spectrum (Fig. S3-6), and correlations of H-2/H-3 in the <sup>1</sup>H-<sup>1</sup>H COSY (Fig.  
96 S3-5) further confirmed the above structure of compound **3** (Fig. 2).

97 The relative configurations of compound **3** were established by the analysis of NOESY  
98 spectrum (Fig. S3-7). The correlations (Fig. 3) of H-3/H<sub>3</sub>-29, H-6β/H<sub>3</sub>-29, H-6β/H<sub>3</sub>-19,  
99 H-6β/H<sub>3</sub>-30, H<sub>3</sub>-30/H-7, H<sub>3</sub>-30/H-12β, and H-12β/H-17, assigned the β-oriented H-3, H-7, H-17,  
100 H<sub>3</sub>-19, H<sub>3</sub>-29, and H<sub>3</sub>-30. The correlations between H-5/H<sub>3</sub>-28, H-5/H-9, and H-9/H<sub>2</sub>-18  
101 concluded the α-oriented H-5, H-9, and H<sub>3</sub>-18. Its negative specific rotation  $[[\alpha]_D^{20} = -121.6, (c =$   
102  $0.1, \text{MeOH})]$  and NMR data were similar to those of (3α,7α,13α,17α,20S,21R,23R,24S)-3-  
103 (3-methylbutanoate)-21,23-epoxy-21-methoxy-13,30-cyclodammarane-3,7,24,25-tetrol [16]. Then,  
104 the structure of dictamtriterpenol D (**3**) was elucidated.

105 Furthermore, the anti-proliferation activities of the isolated compounds on HepG2 and A549  
106 cell lines were used to evaluate the anti-proliferation activities. And compounds **1**, **5**, and **8** (IC<sub>50</sub>  
107 values in the range of 1.84±0.03 to 14.98±0.39 μM) displayed significant anti-proliferation  
108 activity against HepG2 cells. Meanwhile, compounds **1**, **4**, **9**, **10**, and **13** (IC<sub>50</sub> values in the range  
109 of 1.63±0.04 to 8.56±1.46 μM) displayed significant anti-proliferation activity against A549 cells.  
110 The data were summarised in Tab. S2.

## 111 **Conclusion**

112 In conclusion, three new triterpenoids (**1-3**) and ten known ones (**4-13**) were isolated from  
113 the root bark of *D. dasycarpus*, and evaluated for anti-proliferation activities against HepG2 and  
114 A549 cell lines. Interestingly, compounds **1**, **5**, and **8** displayed significant anti-proliferation  
115 activity against HepG2 cells. And compounds **1**, **4**, **9**, **10**, and **13** displayed significant  
116 anti-proliferation activity against A549 cells. Above all can be concluded that the carbonyl,  
117 carboxyl, and glycosyl groups may be the anti-proliferation activity group against the above two  
118 human cancer cell lines. Therefore, this study can enrich the variety of sesquiterpenoids and

119 provide the scientific basis for future research on *D. dasycarpus*.

## 120 **Experimental**

### 121 **General experimental procedures**

122 1D and 2D NMR spectra were acquired on a Bruker DPX-600 spectrometer. HRESIMS data  
123 of the new compounds were obtained using an AB SCIEX Triple TOF 5600 mass spectrometer.  
124 Preparative HPLC (LC-20AR, Shimadzu) was performed on Shim-pack (5  $\mu$ m, 20 $\times$ 250 mm,  
125 Shimadzu) with a RID-20 A detector with flow rate 5 mL/min. Optical rotation measurements  
126 were conducted on a JASCO P-2000 instrument.

### 127 **Plant material**

128 The root bark of *D. dasycarpus* was collected from Heilongjiang Province in August 2021,  
129 and identified by Professor Rui-Feng Fan of Heilongjiang University of Chinese Medicine, and its  
130 voucher specimen (NO. 20210826) has been deposited at Heilongjiang University of Chinese  
131 Medicine.

### 132 **Extraction and Isolation**

133 The root bark of *D. dasycarpus* (75 kg) was extracted with 70% EtOH. The extract was  
134 partitioned with EtOAc, and the EtOAc layer (402.3 g) was separated by silica gel CC  
135 (CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>-CH<sub>3</sub>OH gradient, from 100:1 to 0:1) to yield seven fractions (Fr. A-G). Fr. B (18.7 g)  
136 was purified by ODS chromatography and afforded nine fractions Fr. B 1-9. Fr. B 5 (325.1 mg)  
137 was purified by preparative HPLC (MeOH/H<sub>2</sub>O 80%) to afford compounds **1** (6.3 mg), **8** (12.2  
138 mg), and **11** (7.6 mg). Fr. B 9 (117.3 mg) was purified by preparative HPLC (MeOH/H<sub>2</sub>O 83%) to  
139 afford compounds **2** (11.7 mg), **9** (32.6 mg), and **10** (7.5 mg). Fr. F (42.2 g) was purified by ODS  
140 chromatography and afforded fifteen fractions Fr. F 1-15. Fr. F 2 (423.8 mg) was purified by

141 preparative HPLC (MeOH/H<sub>2</sub>O 70%) to afford compounds **4** (11.9 mg) and **7** (9.1 mg). Fr 12  
142 (236.8 mg) was purified by preparative HPLC (MeOH/H<sub>2</sub>O 85%) to afford compounds **3** (6.3 mg),  
143 **12** (12.2 mg), and **13** (7.6 mg). Fr. G (13.5 g) was purified by ODS chromatography and afforded  
144 fifteen eight Fr. G 1-8. Fr. G 4 (273.9 mg) was purified by preparative HPLC (MeOH/H<sub>2</sub>O 75%)  
145 to afford compounds **5** (23.7 mg) and **6** (3.8 mg).

#### 146 **Compound characterization data**

147 Dictamriterpenol B (**1**): white amorphous powder;  $[\alpha]_D^{20} = -79.1$ , (c = 0.1, MeOH);  
148 HR-ESI-MS:  $m/z$  601.3705 [M+Na]<sup>+</sup> (calcd for 601.3711); IR (KBr):  $\nu_{\max}$  3405, 2928, 1716, 1604,  
149 1389, 1033 cm<sup>-1</sup>; <sup>1</sup>H and <sup>13</sup>C NMR (CD<sub>3</sub>OD, 600, 150 MHz) data, see Tab. 1.

150 Dictamriterpenol C (**2**): white amorphous powder;  $[\alpha]_D^{20} = -63.7$ , (c = 0.1, MeOH);  
151 HR-ESI-MS:  $m/z$  610.4318 [M+NH<sub>4</sub>]<sup>+</sup> (calcd for 610.4313); IR (KBr):  $\nu_{\max}$  3422, 2971, 1603,  
152 1386, 1034 cm<sup>-1</sup>; <sup>1</sup>H and <sup>13</sup>C NMR (CD<sub>3</sub>OD, 600, 150 MHz) data, see Tab. 1.

153 Dictamriterpenol D (**3**): white amorphous powder;  $[\alpha]_D^{20} = -121.6$ , (c = 0.1, MeOH);  
154 HR-ESI-MS:  $m/z$  589.3522 [M+K]<sup>+</sup> (calcd for 589.3507); IR (KBr):  $\nu_{\max}$  3406, 2937, 1603, 1386,  
155 1032 cm<sup>-1</sup>; <sup>1</sup>H and <sup>13</sup>C NMR (CD<sub>3</sub>OD, 600, 150 MHz) data, see Tab. 1.

#### 156 **Cell culture**

157 HepG2 and A549 cells (Stem Cell Bank, Chinese Academy of Sciences) were maintained in  
158 DMEM (Gibco), supplemented with 10% fetal bovine serum (FBS, Sigma), 1%  
159 penicillin-streptomycin (Thermo) at 37 °C in the presence of 5% CO<sub>2</sub>.

#### 160 **CCK-8 assay**

161 Cell viability was measured with the CCK-8 (APEX-BIO) assay. The HepG2 cells were  
162 seeded at a density of  $5 \times 10^3$  cells/well into 96-well plates overnight, the A549 cells were seeded

163 at a density of  $1 \times 10^4$  cells/well into 96-well plates overnight, then compounds **1-13** were added  
164 at various concentrations (0.15625, 0.3125, 0.625, 1.25, 2.5, 5, 10 and 20  $\mu\text{M}$ ). After 24 h  
165 incubation, 10  $\mu\text{L}$  CCK-8 solution was appended to each well, and the optical density (OD) value  
166 in each well was measured at 450 nm using a microplate reader (BioTeK, USA).

### 167 **Conflict of interest**

168 Ye Sun and Yan Liu contributed equally to this study.

169 No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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### 176 **Supporting Information**

177 MS, IR, and NMR spectra of compounds **1-3**; half inhibitory concentrations ( $\text{IC}_{50}$ ) for two  
178 cancer cell lines of compounds **1-13**;  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR data of compounds **4-13**.

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