

Supporting Information:

**Synthesis of Tetrasubstituted Symmetrical Pyridines by
Iron-Catalyzed Cyclization of Ketoxime Acetates**

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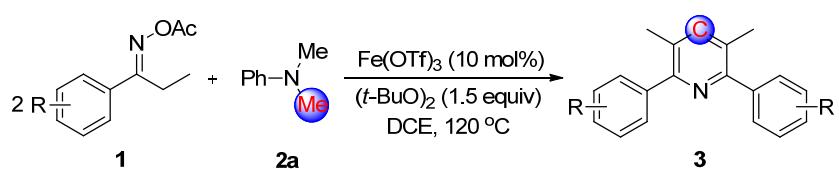
1. General information

Column chromatography was carried out on silica gel. ^1H NMR spectra were recorded on 400 MHz in CDCl_3 and ^{13}C NMR spectra were recorded on 100 MHz in CDCl_3 . The following abbreviations were used to explain multiplicities: s = singlet, d = doublet, t = triplet, q = quartet, m = multiplet. All new products were further characterized by HRMS; copies of their ^1H NMR and ^{13}C NMR spectra are provided. Unless otherwise stated, all reagents and solvents were purchased from commercial suppliers and used without further purification.

2. Typical procedure for preparation of ketoxime carboxylates

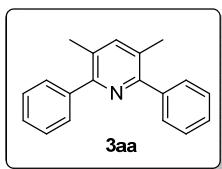
The mixture of ketoxime (3.0 mmol), anhydride (6.0 mmol, 2.0 equiv) was stirred at room temperature to 100 °C for 3h. After completion of the reaction (detected by TLC), the reaction mixture was cooled to room temperature, diluted with EtOAc (25 mL) and washed with H_2O (20 mL) and brine (10 mL). The organic layers were dried over anhydrous Na_2SO_4 and evaporated in vacuo. The residue was purified by column chromatography on silica gel to afford the ketoxime carboxylates with hexanes/ethyl acetate as the eluent.

3. Typical procedure for the synthesis of symmetrical pyridines

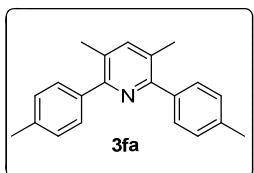


In a 25 mL round bottom flask, the ketoxime acetate **1** (0.4 mmol), *N,N*-dimethylaniline **2a** (0.24 mmol, 29.0 mg), $(t\text{-BuO})_2$ (0.6 mmol, 87.6 mg) and $\text{Fe}(\text{OTf})_3$ (10 mol%, 10.1 mg) was stirred in DCE (3 mL) at 120 °C oil bath. After completion of the reaction (detected by TLC), the reaction mixture was cooled to room temperature, extracted with ethyl acetate (20 mL × 3) and washed with brine (20 mL). The organic layer was dried over by anhydrous Na_2SO_4 and evaporated in vacuo. The desired pyridine **3** was obtained after purification by flash chromatography on silica gel with hexanes/ethyl acetate as the eluent.

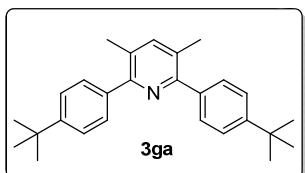
4. Spectroscopic data for symmetrical pyridines



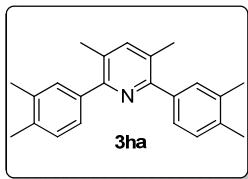
3aa: Yield 73% (37.7 mg); Yellow solid; mp 118-120 °C; ^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 7.58 (d, $J = 7.2$ Hz, 4H), 7.48 (s, 1H), 7.44-7.41 (m, 4H), 7.36 (d, $J = 7.2$ Hz, 2H), 2.38 (s, 6H). ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 155.7, 141.1, 140.6, 129.2, 129.1, 128.0, 127.6, 19.6. HRMS Calcd (ESI) m/z for $\text{C}_{19}\text{H}_{18}\text{N}$: $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 260.1434. Found: 260.1433.



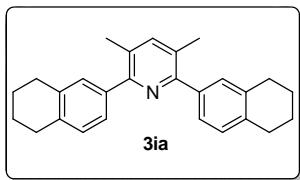
3fa: Yield 70% (40.0 mg); Yellow solid; mp 100-101 °C; ^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 7.48 (d, $J = 7.6$ Hz, 4H), 7.44 (s, 1H), 7.22 (d, $J = 7.6$ Hz, 4H), 2.38 (s, 6H), 2.37 (s, 6H). ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 155.6, 141.1, 137.9, 137.3, 129.1, 128.7, 128.7, 21.2, 19.7. HRMS Calcd (ESI) m/z for $\text{C}_{21}\text{H}_{22}\text{N}$: $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 288.1747. Found: 288.1751.



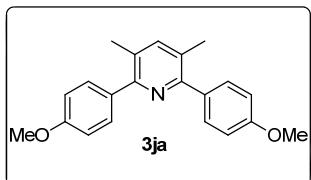
3ga: Yield 72% (53.4 mg); White solid; mp 73-76 °C; ^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 7.51 (d, $J = 8.4$ Hz, 4H), 7.42 (d, $J = 8.4$ Hz, 5H), 2.38 (s, 6H), 1.33 (s, 18H). ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 155.7, 150.4, 141.0, 137.9, 128.8, 128.7, 124.9, 34.5, 31.3, 19.7. HRMS Calcd (ESI) m/z for $\text{C}_{27}\text{H}_{34}\text{N}$: $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 372.2686. Found: 372.2692.



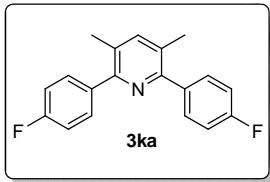
3ha: Yield 75% (47.3 mg); Yellow solid; mp 87-89 °C; ^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 7.43 (s, 1H), 7.37 (s, 2H), 7.29 (d, $J = 7.6$ Hz, 2H), 7.17 (d, $J = 7.6$ Hz, 2H), 2.36 (s, 6H), 2.30 (s, 6H), 2.29 (s, 6H). ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 155.8, 140.9, 138.3, 136.2, 135.9, 130.5, 129.1, 128.6, 126.5, 19.9, 19.7, 19.6. HRMS Calcd (ESI) m/z for $\text{C}_{23}\text{H}_{26}\text{N}$: $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 316.2060. Found: 316.2061.



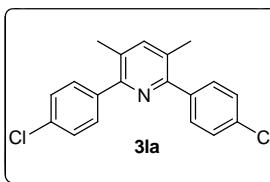
3ia: Yield 74% (54.3 mg); Yellow oil; ^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 7.42 (s, 1H), 7.29-7.25 (m, 4H), 7.09 (d, $J = 7.6$ Hz, 2H), 2.80 (s, 8H), 2.37 (s, 6H), 1.80 (s, 8H). ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 155.8, 140.9, 137.9, 136.8, 136.5, 129.9, 128.6, 128.5, 126.2, 29.4, 29.2, 23.2, 19.7. HRMS Calcd (ESI) m/z for $\text{C}_{27}\text{H}_{30}\text{N}$: $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 368.2373. Found: 368.2369.



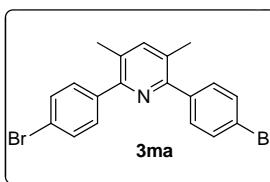
3ja: Yield 64% (40.7 mg); Yellow solid; mp 96-98 °C; ^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 7.55 (d, $J = 8.8$ Hz, 4H), 7.43 (s, 1H), 6.96 (d, $J = 8.8$ Hz, 4H), 3.84 (s, 6H), 2.37 (s, 6H). ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 159.1, 155.2, 141.2, 133.2, 130.4, 128.5, 113.3, 55.3, 19.7. HRMS Calcd (ESI) m/z for $\text{C}_{21}\text{H}_{22}\text{NO}_2$: $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 320.1645. Found: 320.1642.



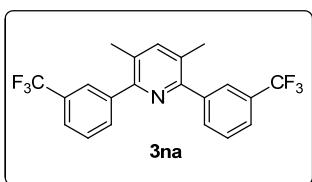
3ka: Yield 68% (40.2 mg); White solid; mp 89-91 °C; ^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 7.57-7.53 (m, 4H), 7.48 (s, 1H), 7.14-7.09 (m, 4H), 2.36 (s, 6H). ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 162.5 (d, $J_{CF} = 245.1$ Hz), 154.8, 141.3, 136.5, 130.9 (d, $J_{CF} = 8.1$ Hz), 129.2, 115.0 (d, $J_{CF} = 21.3$ Hz), 19.6. HRMS Calcd (ESI) m/z for $\text{C}_{19}\text{H}_{16}\text{F}_2\text{N}$: [M+H] $^+$ 296.1245. Found: 296.1244.



3la: Yield 67% (43.8 mg); White solid; mp 138-139 °C; ^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 7.52 (d, $J = 8.4$ Hz, 4H), 7.48 (s, 1H), 7.40 (d, $J = 8.4$ Hz, 4H), 2.37 (s, 6H). ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 154.6, 141.4, 138.8, 133.8, 130.5, 129.4, 128.3, 19.6. HRMS Calcd (ESI) m/z for $\text{C}_{19}\text{H}_{16}\text{Cl}_2\text{N}$: [M+H] $^+$ 328.0654. Found: 328.0654.

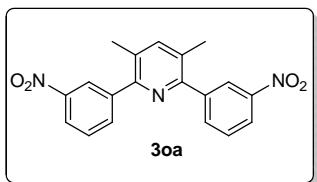


3ma: Yield 65% (54.0 mg); White solid; mp 145-146 °C; ^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 7.56 (d, $J = 8.4$ Hz, 4H), 7.48 (s, 1H), 7.45 (d, $J = 8.4$ Hz, 4H), 2.36 (s, 6H). ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 154.6, 141.5, 139.3, 131.2, 130.8, 129.4, 122.0, 19.6. HRMS Calcd (ESI) m/z for $\text{C}_{19}\text{H}_{16}\text{Br}_2\text{N}$: [M+H] $^+$ 415.9644. Found: 415.9638.

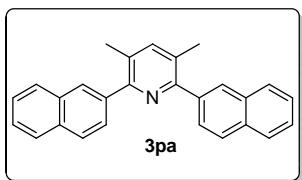


3na: Yield 68% (53.4 mg); Yellow oil; ^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 7.84 (s, 2H),

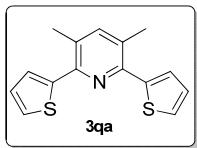
7.77 (d, $J = 7.6$ Hz, 2H), 7.64 (d, $J = 8.0$ Hz, 2H), 7.59-7.54 (m, 3H), 2.38 (s, 6H). ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 154.5, 141.6, 141.0, 132.5, 130.7, 130.4, 130.0, 128.7, 126.0 (q, $J_{\text{CF}} = 3.9$ Hz), 124.6 (q, $J_{\text{CF}} = 3.7$ Hz), 19.4.



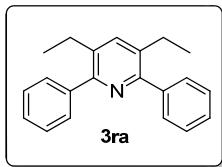
3oa: Yield 50% (35.0 mg); Yellow solid; mp 173-175 °C; ^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 8.46 (s, 2H), 8.27 (d, $J = 8.0$ Hz, 2H), 7.95 (d, $J = 7.6$ Hz, 2H), 7.67-7.60 (m, 3H), 2.44 (s, 6H). ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 153.6, 148.0, 142.0, 141.6, 135.3, 130.5, 129.3, 124.1, 122.9, 19.5.



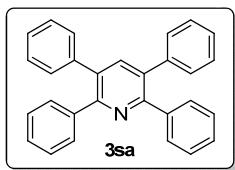
3pa: Yield 66% (47.3 mg); Yellow solid; mp 73-75 °C; ^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 8.07 (s, 2H), 7.92-7.85 (m, 6H), 7.77 (d, $J = 8.4$ Hz, 2H), 7.55 (s, 1H), 7.50-7.48 (m, 4H), 2.45 (s, 6H). ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 155.7, 141.3, 138.0, 133.1, 132.8, 129.5, 128.3, 128.3, 127.7, 127.6, 127.3, 126.0, 126.0, 19.8. HRMS Calcd (ESI) m/z for $\text{C}_{27}\text{H}_{22}\text{N}$: $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 360.1747. Found: 360.1741.



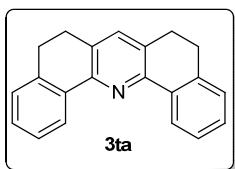
3qa: Yield 60% (32.5 mg); Yellow solid; mp 118-120 °C; ^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 7.49 (d, $J = 4.8$ Hz, 2H), 7.40 (d, $J = 4.8$ Hz, 2H), 7.35 (s, 1H), 7.13-7.11 (m, 2H), 2.54 (s, 6H). ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 148.0, 145.7, 142.9, 127.6, 127.3, 127.2, 126.3, 20.8. HRMS Calcd (ESI) m/z for $\text{C}_{15}\text{H}_{14}\text{NS}_2$: $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 272.0562. Found: 272.0563.



3ra: Yield 58% (33.2 mg); White solid; mp 130-132 °C; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.55-7.52 (m, 5H), 7.43-7.33 (m, 6H), 2.73-2.68 (m, 4H), 1.21 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 6H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 155.6, 140.8, 137.4, 135.4, 129.1, 128.0, 127.5, 25.3, 15.3. HRMS Calcd (ESI) m/z for C₂₁H₂₂N: [M+H]⁺ 288.1747. Found: 288.1745.



3sa: Yield 46% (35.2 mg); Yellow solid; mp 197-199 °C; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.77 (s, 1H), 7.49 (s, 4H), 7.29-7.25 (m, 16H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 155.3, 141.2, 139.9, 139.6, 134.3, 130.1, 129.5, 128.3, 127.8, 127.8, 127.2. HRMS Calcd (ESI) m/z for C₂₉H₂₂N: [M+H]⁺ 384.1747. Found: 384.1747.



3ta: Yield 75% (42.5 mg); Yellow solid; mp 155-157 °C; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.52 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 7.41-7.37 (m, 2H), 7.31-7.28 (m, 3H), 7.23 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 2.95 (s, 8H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 150.4, 137.9, 135.2, 135.0, 130.5, 128.6, 127.7, 127.0, 124.9, 28.2, 27.9. HRMS Calcd (ESI) m/z for C₂₁H₁₈N: [M+H]⁺ 284.1434. Found: 284.1440.

5. General computational calculation details

Calculations were performed with Gaussian 09 program.¹ For all calculations, geometry optimizations of minima and transition states were carried out in the gas phase with the B3LYP² functional and the 6-31G(d) basis set for all atoms. Frequency analyses were carried out at the same level to verify all of the stationary points as minima (zero imaginary frequencies) or transition states (one imaginary frequency) and to evaluate the zero-point vibrational energy and thermal corrections at 298 K.

Cartesian coordinates of optimized structures

acetophenone oxime acetate coordinates with two FeCl₂

| | | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| C | -4.37347500 | 2.60398200 | 0.56071000 |
| C | -2.98741100 | 2.48141900 | 0.54654600 |
| C | -2.37598500 | 1.50775100 | -0.26138700 |
| C | -3.17982800 | 0.67656700 | -1.07324900 |
| C | -4.56867100 | 0.81775600 | -1.06031700 |
| C | -5.16568300 | 1.77281800 | -0.23723500 |
| H | -4.83836100 | 3.34628500 | 1.20208700 |
| H | -2.38344200 | 3.11368200 | 1.18880500 |
| H | -2.72067500 | -0.01104100 | -1.77934300 |
| H | -5.17563400 | 0.18516400 | -1.70040100 |
| H | -6.24629800 | 1.87767200 | -0.22319000 |
| C | -0.91158400 | 1.31601800 | -0.21300300 |
| N | -0.55327000 | 0.06885600 | -0.31909600 |
| C | 0.02730900 | 2.45616800 | 0.02126600 |
| H | -0.45157700 | 3.40669900 | -0.21593400 |
| H | 0.32696000 | 2.46383300 | 1.07818300 |
| H | 0.95035700 | 2.35115700 | -0.55559800 |
| O | 0.87047300 | -0.08136300 | -0.21645900 |
| C | 1.47628000 | -0.88057700 | -1.11675200 |
| O | 2.69123500 | -1.01284200 | -0.97089000 |
| C | 0.70690300 | -1.52824300 | -2.21587500 |

| | | | |
|----|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| H | -0.05015500 | -2.21446900 | -1.81776100 |
| H | 0.17657100 | -0.76906900 | -2.80051600 |
| H | 1.40571600 | -2.07016000 | -2.85259300 |
| Cl | -2.36917200 | -2.98858300 | -0.94133500 |
| Cl | -2.34754400 | -0.88081900 | 2.54570600 |
| Fe | -2.04128800 | -1.27509800 | 0.41390300 |
| Fe | 4.01373300 | 0.17882200 | 0.02507500 |
| Cl | 3.65234100 | 2.18563100 | -0.81717600 |
| Cl | 5.25349600 | -0.80134000 | 1.51227900 |

A with $[\text{FeCl}_2]^+$

| | | | |
|----|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| C | -4.54493000 | 0.05610400 | 0.00011800 |
| C | -3.41274600 | 0.86955600 | -0.00055600 |
| C | -2.12759500 | 0.30252900 | -0.00039600 |
| C | -2.00550500 | -1.09814800 | 0.00046300 |
| C | -3.13492100 | -1.90810200 | 0.00112000 |
| C | -4.40948300 | -1.33253800 | 0.00095000 |
| H | -5.53230000 | 0.50874900 | -0.00000600 |
| H | -3.53785000 | 1.94700300 | -0.00120500 |
| H | -1.01442200 | -1.53952200 | 0.00059800 |
| H | -3.02416000 | -2.98857000 | 0.00176500 |
| H | -5.29245800 | -1.96552400 | 0.00147400 |
| C | -0.90584100 | 1.15673600 | -0.00109100 |
| N | 0.26043300 | 0.65599400 | -0.00081700 |
| C | -1.06094200 | 2.66868400 | -0.00216500 |
| H | -1.61557200 | 2.99722800 | -0.88831400 |
| H | -1.61534100 | 2.99853000 | 0.88364300 |
| H | -0.07890900 | 3.14372600 | -0.00262700 |
| Cl | 2.90767100 | -0.40686000 | -1.91372600 |
| Cl | 2.90654500 | -0.40335700 | 1.91495100 |
| Fe | 1.94838800 | -0.00803100 | -0.00004200 |

Fe(OAc)Cl₂

| | | | |
|----|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| O | -1.23533400 | -0.00231000 | -1.08492900 |
| C | -1.90991300 | -0.00421700 | 0.00763000 |
| O | -1.23418600 | -0.00445500 | 1.09630000 |
| C | -3.40376100 | -0.00147200 | -0.00116600 |
| H | -3.75596700 | 0.90749100 | -0.50038400 |
| H | -3.76224200 | -0.85541000 | -0.58470500 |
| H | -3.79396400 | -0.04567100 | 1.01601000 |
| Fe | 0.43864100 | 0.00005000 | -0.00119300 |
| Cl | 1.52000500 | -1.86361400 | -0.00118100 |
| Cl | 1.51209500 | 1.86835300 | -0.00056300 |

Reference

- (1) Gaussian 09, Revision A.02, M. J. Frisch, G. W. Trucks, H. B. Schlegel, G. E. Scuseria, M. A. Robb, J. R. Cheeseman, G. Scalmani, V. Barone, B. Mennucci, G. A. Petersson, H. Nakatsuji, M. Caricato, X. Li, H. P. Hratchian, A. F. Izmaylov, J. Bloino, G. Zheng, J. L. Sonnenberg, M. Hada, M. Ehara, K. Toyota, R. Fukuda, J. Hasegawa, M. Ishida, T. Nakajima, Y. Honda, O. Kitao, H. Nakai, T. Vreven, Jr., J. A. Montgomery, J. E. Peralta, F. Ogliaro, M. Bearpark, J. J. Heyd, E. Brothers, K. N. Kudin, V. N. Staroverov, R. Kobayashi, J. Normand, K. Raghavachari, A. Rendell, J. C. Burant, S. S. Iyengar, J. Tomasi, M. Cossi, N. Rega, J. M. Millam, M. Klene, J. E. Knox, J. B. Cross, V. Bakken, C. Adamo, J. Jaramillo, R. Gomperts, R. E. Stratmann, O. Yazyev, A. J. Austin, R. Cammi, C. Pomelli, J. W. Ochterski, R. L. Martin, K. Morokuma, V. G. Zakrzewski, G. A. Voth, P. Salvador, J. J. Dannenberg, S. Dapprich, A. D. Daniels, Ö. Farkas, J. B. Foresman, J. V. Ortiz, J. Cioslowski and D. J. Fox, Gaussian, Inc., Wallingford CT, 2009.
- (2) (a) A. D. Becke, *J. Chem. Phys.*, 1993, **98**, 5648-5652. (b) C. Lee, W. Yang, R. G. Parr, *Physical Review B Condensed Matter and Materials Physics*, 1988, **37**, 785-789.

6. Appendix (copies of ^1H and ^{13}C NMR spectra)

