Supporting Information

Texturing In-Situ: N, S-Enriched Hierarchically Porous

Carbon as Highly Active Reversible Oxygen Electrocatalyts

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Experimental Section

Materials Synthesis. The macro-porous N, S-doped carbon (CNS) was synthesized using as a hard template method. Typically, 1 g silica powder (fumed, particle size *ca*. 0.2-0.3 μ m, Sigma-Aldrich) was dispersed into 30 mL DI water, followed by addition of 1 g sucrose, 1 g trithiocyanuric acid (TA) and 0.1 g sulfuric acid (96-97 wt%). This

mixture solution was then sonicated for 10 min being heated up to 100 °C for liquid

evaporation. The remaining solid was then kept at 160 $^{\circ}$ C for 10 hrs to polymerize the

sucrose and cross-link the TA monomers. The weight percent of the SiO_2 within the mixture was determined by TGA. A certain amount of the obtained powder was then finely grinded and mixed uniformly with an excess amount of Teflon powder (5 μ m)

(SiO₂: Teflon= 1:12, weight ratio), which was subject to calcination at 600 $^{\circ}$ C for 1 h

and further calcined at different eventual temperatures (800-1100 °C) for 3 hrs under

Ar atmosphere with an identical ramp rate of 5 $^{\circ}$ C min⁻¹. The resulted powder can be readily used as catalyst directly. The samples are named as T-CNS, where T stands for the pyrolysis temperatures (800-1100 $^{\circ}$ C).

Physicochemical Characterization. The crystal structure of the catalyst was identified by a Bruker D2 Phaser X-ray diffractometer with Cu K_{α} radiation ($\lambda =$

0.15418 nm) operating at 30 kV and 10 mA, respectively. Raman scattering measurements were performed with a multichannel modular triple Raman system (Renishaw Co.) with confocal microscopy at room temperature using the 633 nm laser. The morphology and microstructure of the samples were revealed by a JEOL-2001F field-emission TEM, and the accessory EELS was used to determine to composite elements. XPS analyses were conducted on an ESCALAB 250 photoelectron spectroscopy (Thermo Fisher Scienctific) at 1.2×10^{-9} mbar using Al K_a X-ray beam (1486.6 eV). The XPS spectra were charge corrected to the adventitious C 1s peak at

284.5 eV. TGA were carried out on a TA #SDT Q600 analyser at 30-800 °C with an

 O_2 flow of 40 mL min⁻¹. The nitrogen adsorption and desorption isotherms were characterized using a Micrometrics ASAP 2020 analyzer. Pore size distribution and specific surface area were obtained via Barrett-Joyner-Halenda (BJH) and Brunauer-Emmett-Teller (BET) methods from adsorption branch of the isotherm, at a relative pressure range of P/P₀ = 0.06-0.25.

Electrochemical Measurements. All electrochemical measurements were carried out on a CHI 760D electrochemical workstation integrated with a RRDE-3A rotating ring disk electrode apparatus in a typical 3-eletrode system, in which a glassy carbon electrode (GCE, 3mm in diameter) loaded with different catalysts was used as working electrode, with a Ag/AgCl (in 3 M KCl) electrode and a Pt mesh as reference and counter electrode, respectively. The recorded potential was converted to a reversible hydrogen electrode (RHE). 0.1 M KOH or 0.1 M HClO₄ solution served as the electrolyte for ORR measurements. The loading masses for metal-free catalysts were 140 μ g cm⁻² for alkaline solution and 600 μ g cm⁻² for acidic electrolyte. Pt/C (Alfa Acesar, 20 wt%) with a loading mass of 140 μ g cm⁻² was used for reference. The onset potential (E_{onset}) for ORR is defined as the critical potential where the reduction current density reaches 1% of the limiting current density. All the ORR currents presented in the figures are Faradaic currents, i.e., after correction for the capacitive current. Each catalyst was repeated at least 3 times for the above measurements to exclude possible incidental errors.

The RRDE tests were conducted with a Pt ring surrounded 4 mm diameter GCE. The Pt ring electrode was set at 1.5 V (vs. RHE) to detect the generated HO_2^- species. The value of n was also calculated through RRDE tests:

$$n = \frac{4i_d}{i_d + \frac{i_r}{N}}$$

the HO₂- yield was calculated from equation:

$$HO_{2}^{-}\% = \frac{200i_{r}}{N(i_{d} + \frac{i_{r}}{N})}$$

here i_d and i_r are the disk current and ring current, respectively, and N is the current collection efficiency of the Pt ring and was determined to be 0.37.

Long term stability tests in ORR were conducted by measuring the current changes of the catalyst modified GCE at a fixed potential of 0.7 V (vs. RHE) and a rotation speed of 1600 rpm in O_2 saturated electrolyte. The cross-over tolerance tests were performed by comparing the CV curves before and after the addition of 10 vol% methanol into the electrolyte.

For OER measurements, the electrolyte was O_2 saturated 0.1 or 1 M KOH solution and the catalyst loading mass was 420 µg cm⁻² for metal-free sample and 140 µg cm⁻² for noble-metal materials (Pt/C and IrO₂). The LSV curves were obtained at a scan rate of 5 mV s⁻¹ and the GCE was rotated at 1600 rpm to alleviate the accumulation of evolved oxygen bubbles on the electrode surface. All the OER currents presented in the figures are Faradaic currents, i.e., after correction for the capacitive current. The E_{onset} for OER is defined as the critical potential where the current density reaches 0.5 mA cm⁻². All the curves were iR corrected unless otherwise stated and in order to get a stable current, the LSV data were collected at the second sweep.

Zn-air battery assembly. The air electrodes for Zn-air battery use stainless steel mesh (SSM) as backing layer, with a gas diffusion layer (GDL) on the air-facing side and catalyst on the water-facing side. A carbon ink consists of carbon black and polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE) emulsion (60 wt%) according to a mass of 3:7 was painted onto the backing layer to form the GDL, which then subject to heating at 200

°C for 30 min. The catalyst was then loaded onto the other side of the SSM by drop-

casting with a loading mass of 2.0 mg cm⁻² for metal-free catalyst and 1.0 mg cm⁻² for Pt/C catalyst. The catalyst ink was prepared as described in the electrochemical measurements section. A polished Zn plate served as anode and the electrolyte were 6.0 M KOH for Zn-air primary batteries and 6.0 M KOH with 0.2 M Zn(Ac)₂ for rechargeable Zn-air batteries. The GDL has an effective area of 1 cm² and allows O₂ from ambient air to reach the catalyst sites.



Fig. S1 Thermal gravimetric analyses of the N, S co-doped carbon samples calcined at different temperatures as well as the un-calcined pristine precursor mixture (marked as C-TA-SiO₂) in O₂ flow. Ramp rate, 5 °C/min; O₂ flow, 40 mL/min.

Note: In the C-TA-SiO₂ mixture, the sharp weight loss starts around 220 °C is probably from the oxidation of the TA molecules, while a further gradual weight loss initiates from ca. 290 °C stems from the oxidation of the partially polymerized sucrose precursors.¹ The residual particles are the introduced SiO₂ template, which has a weight percent of 42%. When excess Teflon powder was mixed with the C-TA-SiO₂ mixture, the SiO₂ can be etched in-situ upon the pyrolysis under inert atmosphere. As shown in Fig. S1, all the pyrolyzed samples present complete weight loss in oxygen flow above 600 °C, indicating the total removal of SiO₂ template. To check the possible residual Si and F impurities within the pyrolyzed carbon samples, we further conducted XPS element analyses. As shown in Fig. S2, both the Si and F contents are extremely low, owing reasonably to the fact that the gaseous SiF₄ species from the etching reaction can be carried away by the carrier gas,^{1, 2} which also confirms the effectiveness of our synthetic approach.



Fig. S2 High-resolution XPS spectra of the (a) Si 2p (b) F 1s core level.



Fig. S3 (a) N₂ adsorption/desorption isotherms of different samples; (b) Pore diameter distribution of all samples.



Fig. S4 (a) N₂ adsorption/desorption isotherms and (b) pore size distribution plots of 900-CNS sample, one-pot etched porous carbon (900-teflon-C) and conventional two-step etched carbon (900-HF-C). A moderate temperature (900 °C) was selected to avoid the possible peculiar deviation of the parameters at higher calcination temperatures.



Fig. S5 XRD patterns of the N, S-enriched carbon calcined at different temperatures.



Fig. S6 TEM observation of (a) porous carbon etched by HF and (b) 1100-CNS resulted from insitu Teflon etching.



Fig. S7 (a) High resolution N 1s XPS spectra of the samples pyrolyzed at different temperatures; (b) Relative content ratios of graphitic, pyrrolic and pyridinic N species within different samples.



Fig. S8 High resolution (a) S 2p and (b) O1s XPS spectra of the samples.



Fig. S9 (a, d, g, j, m) CV curves of different catalysts recorded at 20 mV s⁻¹ in N₂ and O₂ saturated 0.1 M KOH solution; (b, e, h, k, n) LSV curves of the catalysts at different rotation speeds; (c, f, i, l, o) K-L plots of different samples at various potentials including the corresponding electron transfer number.



Fig. S10 Tafel plots of the 1100-CNS and Pt/C catalysts in 0.1 M KOH at 1600 rpm.



Fig. S11 Electrochemical impedance spectra of different catalysts in alkaline solution at 1600 rpm and 0.7 V (vs. RHE).



Fig. S12 Comparison of kinetic limiting currents (J_Ks) of different samples obtained within the mixed kinetic-diffusion region (0.85 V vs. RHE) upon normalization of the electrode area and the BET surface area.



Fig. S13 (a) N₂ adsorption/desorption isotherms and (b) pore diameter distribution of the templatefree (1100-CNS-SiO₂ free) sample. The micropore volume was determined by the t-plot analysis.



Fig. S14 (a) LSV curves of the 1100-CNS sample as well as the controlled bare porous carbon (dopant-free) and 1100-CNS-SiO₂ free (template-free) samples at 1600 rpm in 0.1 M KOH; (b) The corresponding Tafel plots including the Tafel slopes.

Note: The dopant-free sample features a similar Tafel slope compared with the 1100-CNS sample, suggesting a similar mass transport resistance; however, the ORR onset potential of this bare carbon sample is obvious smaller than the 1100-CNS one, denoting an inferior activity. The template-free sample, conversely, gives a comparable onset potential but with remarkably larger Tafel slope, indicating the oxygen transport is hindered by the absence of macropores.³ Similar results were also evinced by the CV tests and RDE tests at different rotation speeds in Fig. S15. The half-wave potential ($E_{1/2}$) of the 1100-CNS-SiO₂ free sample is the smallest among the three samples, whilst the apparent plateau in the LSV curves of the bare carbon sample indicates an inefficient oxygen reduction process via a two-electron (2e⁻) reaction path.³⁻⁵ These results therefore validate that both the macropore and the dopant species play crucial role in the prominent ORR activity of the 1100-CNS sample.



Fig. S15 Electrochemical catalytic performance toward ORR in 0.1 M KOH solution of the control samples: CV scans of the (a) template-free pyrolyzed (1100-CNS-SiO₂ free) sample and (c) bare porous carbon (dopant-free) substrate; LSV curves of the (b) 1100-CNS-SiO₂ free and (d) bare carbon samples at different rotating speeds.



Fig. S16 Cross-over tolerance tests of the representative (a) 1100-CNS and (b) Pt/C samples before and after the addition of 10 vol% methanol into 0.1 M KOH. The drastic anodic current of the Pt/C modified electrode resulted from significant methanol oxidation reaction, suggesting the susceptive selectivity of Pt/C catalyst.



Fig. S17 Chronoamperometric durability tests of the 1100-CNS and referenced Pt/C samples at 1600 rpm and 0.7 V (vs. RHE) in O_2 saturated 0.1 M KOH.



Fig. S18 LSV curves of the 1100-CNS sample in 0.1 M HClO₄ at different rotation speeds.



Fig. S19 Cross-over tolerance tests of the representative (a) 1100-CNS and (b) Pt/C samples before and after the addition of 10 vol% methanol into 0.1 M HClO₄.



Fig. S20 Chronoamperometric durability tests of the 1100-CNS and referenced Pt/C samples at 1600 rpm and 0.7 V (vs. RHE) in O_2 saturated 0.1 M HClO₄.



Fig. S21 Chronoamperometric durability test of the 1100-CNS at 1.60 V (vs. RHE) in 0.1 M KOH, iR not corrected.



Fig. S22 LSV curves of different samples for (a) ORR and (b) OER at 1600 rpm in 0.1 M KOH.
The 1100-CNS sample is enriched with N, S as well as residual O heteroatoms. The controlled N, O co-doped sample (N, O-C) was synthesized with identical procedure for that of the 1100-CNS one except for replacing trithiocyanuric acid (C₃H₃N₃S₃) with melamine (C₃H₆N₆). Bare porous carbon (O-C) was also measured to review the role of residual oxygen element.



Fig. S23 Side-view and front-view of the static Zn-air battery device. The shown Zn plate is 1×1.5 cm in size while all casted catalysts are 1×1 cm in size.

Sample	S _{BET}	Smicro	V _{tol}	V _{micro}	Element Ratio (wt%)				
	m ² g ⁻¹		cm ³ g ⁻¹		C	0	N	S	N+S
800-CNS	624	220	1.403	0.106	87.59	2.78	4.83	4.8	9.63
900-CNS	749	321	1.606	0.157	89.38	2.9	3.3	4.41	7.71
1000-CNS	801	347	1.762	0.169	90.29	3.5	2.59	3.62	6.21
1100-CNS	840	364	1.877	0.177	93.64	3.15	1.33	1.88	3.21
900-teflon-C	849	335	1.995	0.163	96.38	3.62	-	-	-
900-HF-C	763	169	2.316	0.079	95.86	4.14	-	-	-
900-HF-CNS	528	45	2.186	0.017	90.19	3.42	3.09	3.30	6.39

Table 1 Porous structural characteristics and elemental compositions of different samples

Note: the two-step synthesized samples are marked as 900-HF-XX (C for bare carbon, CNS for N, S-enriched carbon); 900-teflon-C is the one-pot pyrolyzed bare carbon material.

Catalyst	Loading	Onset	Half-wave	Limiting-Current	Reference
	Mass	Potential	Potential	Density	
	(mg cm ⁻²)	(V vs. RHE)	(V vs. RHE)	@1600 rpm	
				(mA cm ⁻²)	
N-doped carbon	-	0.97	0.84	5.6	Science
nanotube arrays					2009 , 323, 760
C ₃ N ₄ @mesoporous	0.28	0.87	0.75	3.7	J. Am. Chem. Soc.
carbon					2011 , 133, 20116
N-graphene QDs	0.28	0.76	0.65	2.7	J. Am. Chem. Soc.
					2012 , 134, 15
B, N-graphene	0.28	0.86	0.68	5.2	Angew. Chem. Int.
					Ed. 2013, 52, 3110
Te, P-doped porous	0.1	0.89	0.79	5.7	J. Am. Chem. Soc.
carbon fiber					2014 , 136, 14385
N-doped	0.1	0.92	0.85	5.8	Nature Commun.
meso/micro porous	(0.5)	(0.92)	(0.87)	(5.8)	2014 , 5, 4973
carbon					
N, S-doped	0.35	0.87	0.61	1.8	Adv. Mater.
graphene					2014 , 26, 6186
N, P-doped	0.15	0.94	0.85	4.3	Nature Nanotech.
mesoporous carbon					2015 , 10, 444
N-doped	0.29	-	0.85	5.4	ACS Nano
hierarchical porous					2016 , <i>10</i> , 4364
carbon					
N-doped porous	0.29	0.98	0.88	5.5	Adv. Energy Mater.
carbon					2016 , 1502389
N-doped porous	0.2	0.9	0.77	5.79	Adv. Mater.
carbon nanosheets					2016 , 28, 5080
N, S-doped carbon	0.2	0.92	0.77	4.3	Nano Energy
nanosheets					2016 , 19, 373
N-doped porous	0.1	0.97	0.82	4.7	Adv. Mater.
carbon fiber					2016 , 28, 3000
N, P-doped CGHNs	0.3	0.94	0.82	5.6	Adv. Mater.
					2016 , 28, 4606
N-doped graphene	0.6	0.92	0.84	5.5	Sci. Adv.
					2016 , 2:e1501122
N, S-doped porous	0.14	0.99	0.85	5.8	This work
carbon	(0.42)	(0.99)	(0.88)	(6.4)	

Table S2 Comparison study of some advanced metal-free ORR catalysts in 0.1 M KOH electrolyte

Catalyst	Loading	Onset	Half-wave	Limiting-Current	Electrolyte	Reference		
	Mass	Potential	Potential	Density				
	$(mg cm^{-2})$	(V vs. RHE)	(V vs. RHE)	@1600 rpm				
				(mA cm ⁻²)				
N-doped	0.8	0.8	0.5	4.5	0.1 M HClO ₄	J. Am. Chem. Soc.		
mesoporous						2011 , 133, 206		
carbon								
N-carbon	0.25	0.65	0.42	5.5	0.5 M H ₂ SO ₄	Adv. Mater.		
spheres						2013 , 25, 998		
N-doped	0.5	0.84	0.72	4.6	0.5 M H ₂ SO ₄	Nature Commun.		
meso/micro						2014 , 5, 4973		
porous carbon								
N-doped	0.6	0.75	0.57	5	0.5 M H ₂ SO ₄	Angew. Chem. Int.		
mesoporous						Ed. 2014, 53, 1570		
carbon sheet								
N, P-doped	0.45	0.82	0.62	5.6	0.1 M HClO ₄	Nature Nanotech.		
mesoporous						2015 , 10, 444		
carbon								
N, P-doped	0.6	0.9	0.68	5.7	0.1 M HClO ₄	Adv. Mater.		
CGHNs						2016 , 28, 4606		
Fe-N-C	0.1	0.82	0.6	6	0.1 M HClO ₄	J. Am. Chem. Soc.		
						2014 , 136, 11027		
Fe ₃ C-C	0.6	0.9	0.73	5.5	0.1 M HClO ₄	Angew. Chem. Int.		
						Ed. 2014, 53, 3675		
Fe ₃ C-CNT	1.2	0.89	0.63	<i>ca</i> . 6	0.5 M H ₂ SO ₄	J. Am. Chem. Soc.		
						2015 , 137, 1436		
Fe-N-C	0.6	0.84	0.62	5	0.5 M H ₂ SO ₄	Angew. Chem. Int.		
nanofiber						Ed. 2015, 54, 8179		
N, S-doped	0.6	0.88	0.73	8.3	0.1 M HClO ₄	This work		
porous carbon	(0.6)	(0.88)	(0.72)	(8.2)	(0.5 M H ₂ SO ₄)			

Table S3 Comparison study of some advanced metal-free and non-noble metal based ORR catalysts in acidic electrolyte

Catalyst	Loading	OER	OER	ORR	ΔE	Electrolyte	Reference	
	Mass	Onset	$E_{J=10}$	E _{1/2}	$(E_{j=10} - E_{1/2})$			
	(mg cm ⁻²)	Potential	(V vs. RHE)	(V vs. RHE)	(V)			
		(V vs. RHE)						
MnO _x Film	-	1.30	1.77	0.73	1.04	0.1 M KOH	J. Am. Chem. Soc.	
							2010 , 132, 13612	
Co ₃ O ₄ /N-doped	1.0	1.40	1.54	0.83	0.71	1 M KOH	Nat. Mater.	
graphene							2011 , 10, 780	
H-Pt/CaMnO ₃	0.085	1.50	1.80	0.79	1.01	0.1 M KOH	Adv. Mater.	
							2014 , 26, 2047	
Mn _x O _y /N-doped	0.21	1.55	1.68	0.81	0.87	0.1 M KOH	Angew. Chem. Int.	
carbon							Ed. 2014 , 53, 8508	
CoO/N-doped	0.7	1.30	1.57	0.81	0.76	1 M KOH	Energy Environ.	
graphene							Sci. 2014, 7, 609	
Fe@N-C	0.31	<i>ca</i> . 1.52	1.71	0.83	0.88	0.1 M KOH	Nano Energy	
							2015 , 13, 387	
P-doped C ₃ N ₄ on	0.2	1.53	1.63	0.67	0.96	0.1 M KOH	Angew. Chem. Int.	
carbon-fiber paper							Ed. 2015 , 54, 4646	
N-doped porous	0.1	1.43	1.84	0.82	1.02	0.1 M KOH	Adv. Mater.	
carbon fiber							2016 , 28, 3000	
N, S-doped carbon	0.2	-	1.65	0.77	0.88	0.1 M KOH	Nano Energy	
nanosheet							2016 , 19, 373	
N-doped graphene	0.3	1.53	1.66	0.84	0.82	0.1 M KOH	Sci. Adv.	
		(1.51)	(1.59)	(0.84)	(0.75)	(1 M KOH)	2016 , 2:e1501122	
N, S-doped porous	0.42	1.30	1.69	0.88	0.81	0.1 M KOH	This Work	
carbon		(1.30)	(1.60)	(0.88)	(0.72)	(1 M KOH)		

Table S4 Comparison study of some recently reported bi-functional ORR/OER catalysts in alkaline electrolyte

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