

**ELECTRONIC SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION for:**

**Conformationally flexible arylethynyl bis-urea receptors bind  
disparate oxoanions with similar, high affinities**

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## Experimental Procedures

**General methods.**  $^1\text{H}$ ,  $^{13}\text{C}$ , and  $^{19}\text{F}$  NMR spectra were obtained on a Varian Mercury 300 MHz ( $^1\text{H}$ : 300.09 MHz), Inova 500 MHz ( $^1\text{H}$ : 500.10 MHz,  $^{13}\text{C}$  125.75 MHz,  $^{19}\text{F}$ : 470.56 MHz), or Bruker Avance III HD 600 MHz NMR spectrometer with Prodigy multinuclear broadband BBO CryoProbe ( $^1\text{H}$ : 600.02 MHz,  $^{13}\text{C}$ : 150.89 MHz). Chemical shifts ( $\delta$ ) are expressed in ppm downfield from tetramethylsilane (TMS) using non-deuterated solvent present in the bulk deuterated solvent ( $\text{CDCl}_3$ :  $^1\text{H}$  7.26 ppm,  $^{13}\text{C}$  77.16 ppm;  $d_6\text{-DMSO}$ :  $^1\text{H}$  2.50 ppm,  $^{13}\text{C}$  39.52 ppm;  $d_6\text{-acetone}$ :  $^1\text{H}$  2.05 ppm,  $^{13}\text{C}$  206.7 and 29.9 ppm). Mixed solvent systems were referenced to the most abundant solvent. All NMR spectra were processed using MestReNova NMR processing software. All oxygen-sensitive reactions were performed under an inert atmosphere of nitrogen using Schlenk techniques. Unless otherwise specified, all materials were obtained from TCI-America, Sigma-Aldrich, or Acros and used as received. Tetrabutylammonium salts were dried at 60 °C in *vacuo* prior to use. Aniline **4** was synthesized and desilicated following known procedures.<sup>1</sup> 2,6-Pyridine receptor **2** was synthesized via known procedures.<sup>1</sup> 2,2'-Bipyridyl-6,6'-bis-ethynylaniline was synthesized following published procedures.<sup>2</sup>

**Dianiline **6**.** To a sealable flask, 3,5-dibromopyridine (0.505 g, 2.13 mmol), CuI (0.099 g, 0.524 mmol), and Pd(PPh<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub> (0.212 g, 0.184 mmol) was added under nitrogen. A mixture of degassed DIPA (30 mL) and THF (30 mL) was added to the flask via cannula. The solution was continuously purged with N<sub>2</sub> for an additional 30 min. An N<sub>2</sub>-purged solution of 4-*tert*-butyl-2-ethynylaniline (1.11 g, 6.41 mmol) in degassed DIPA (15 mL) and THF (15 mL) was then transferred into the flask via cannula. The mixture was stirred overnight at 55 °C under an inert atmosphere. The cooled solution was filtered through a 10 cm silica gel plug eluting with CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> and then concentrated *in vacuo*. Column chromatography (2:1 hexanes:Et<sub>2</sub>O) of the crude material afforded **6** (0.368 g, 41%) as an brown-orange solid.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (600 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  8.67 (s, 2H), 7.94 (s, 1H), 7.39 (d,  $J$  = 2.2 Hz, 2H), 7.23 (dd,  $J$  = 8.5, 2.2 Hz, 2H), 6.70 (d,  $J$  = 8.5 Hz, 2H), 4.18 (s, 4H), 1.30 (s, 18H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (151 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  150.48, 145.82, 141.17, 140.24, 128.99, 128.08, 120.47, 114.64, 106.53, 90.83, 90.15, 34.09, 31.51. HRMS (TOF-MS-ES<sup>+</sup>) for C<sub>29</sub>H<sub>31</sub>N<sub>3</sub> [M+H]<sup>+</sup>: calcd 422.2596, found 422.2587.

**3,5-Pyridine receptor 1.** In flame dried glassware under inert N<sub>2</sub> atmosphere, aniline **6** (0.240 g, 0.568 mmol) was dissolved in freshly distilled toluene (75 mL) and *p*-methoxyphenyl isocyanate (0.2 mL, 2.02 mmol) was added via syringe. The reaction mixture was stirred for 24 h at 55 °C. The reaction was cooled and the precipitate was isolated via vacuum filtration. The precipitate was washed with hexanes and dried to give **1** (0.209 g, 51%) as a yellow-white solid. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, *d*<sub>6</sub>-acetone) δ 8.75 (s, 2H), 8.48 (s, 1H), 8.25 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 8.18 (s, 1H), 7.91 (s, 1H), 7.57 (d, *J* = 2.5 Hz, 2H), 7.49 (dd, *J* = 8.9, 2.5 Hz, 2H), 7.43 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 4H), 6.84 (d, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 4H), 3.74 (s, 6H), 1.34 (s, 18H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (151 MHz, *d*<sub>6</sub>-acetone/DMSO) δ 155.70, 153.23, 151.65, 144.99, 141.36, 139.59, 139.57, 133.66, 127.96, 120.90, 120.53, 120.24, 114.57, 110.89, 91.41, 90.57, 55.48, 34.52, 31.36. HRMS (TOF-MS-ES<sup>+</sup>) for C<sub>45</sub>H<sub>45</sub>N<sub>5</sub>O<sub>4</sub> [M+H]<sup>+</sup>: calcd 720.3566, found 720.3559.

**Bipyridine receptor 3.** In flame dried glassware under inert N<sub>2</sub> atmosphere, 2,2'-bipyridyl-6,6'-bis-ethynylaniline (0.124 g, 0.248 mmol) was dissolved in freshly distilled toluene (50 mL) and *p*-methoxyphenyl isocyanate (0.150 mL, 1.52 mmol) was added via syringe. The reaction mixture was stirred at room temperature for 16 h. Hexanes was used to precipitate the crude product, which was then filtered and further washed with hexanes. A minimal amount of ethanol was then added to the crude product in a vial. The vial was sonicated and five drops of deionized water was added to re-precipitate the product. Receptor **3** was then isolated via vacuum filtration (0.104 g, 53%) as a cream-colored powder. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, *d*<sub>6</sub>-acetone/DMSO) δ 9.28 (s, 2H), 8.55 (d, *J* = 7.9 Hz, 2H), 8.23 (s, 2H), 8.20 (d, *J* = 8.8 Hz, 2H), 8.07 (t, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 2H), 7.90 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 7.60 (d, *J* = 2.4 Hz, 2H), 7.52–7.44 (m, 6H), 6.88 (d, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 4H), 3.75 (s, 6H), 1.35 (s, 18H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (151 MHz, *d*<sub>6</sub>-acetone/DMSO) δ 155.73, 155.26, 152.93, 144.77, 142.94, 139.33, 138.22, 133.31, 129.30, 128.72, 127.74, 120.88, 120.48, 120.09, 114.31, 110.55, 94.55, 85.76, 55.27, 34.25, 31.12. HRMS (TOF-MS-ES<sup>+</sup>) for C<sub>50</sub>H<sub>48</sub>N<sub>6</sub>O<sub>4</sub> [M+H]<sup>+</sup>: calcd 797.3815, found 797.3799.

## Titrations

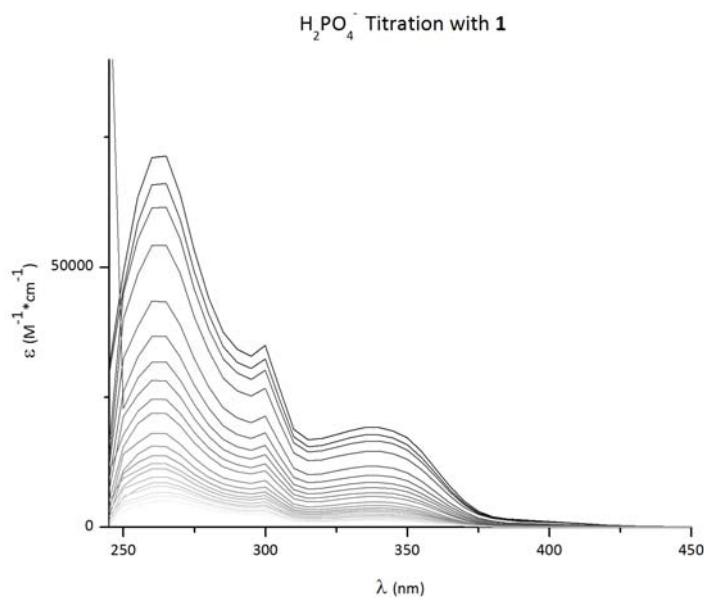
**General Titration Procedures.** Concentration of receptor was kept constant by preparing a stock solution of the receptor and performing a serial dilution with the receptor stock solution to dissolve the guest. Receptor concentration was maintained constant throughout the titration. Tetrabutylammonium salts, purchased from TCI America or SigmaAldrich, were dried by heating to 60 °C *in vacuo* before use. Hamilton gas-tight syringes were used for all titrations. Titrations were performed in triplicate and the reported association constants represent the average fits across all titrations. Representative data are provided for each receptor and anion.

**UV-Vis Titration Conditions.** UV-Vis titrations were carried out on an Agilent Technologies Cary 60 UV-Vis spectrometer. Water-saturated 10% DMSO/90% CHCl<sub>3</sub> v/v% was prepared using HPLC-grade solvents purchased from SigmaAldrich or Fisher Scientific. Association constants were determined by non-linear regression models using Open Data Fit.<sup>3</sup> All host solutions in 10% DMSO/90% CHCl<sub>3</sub> started as deep, marigold-yellow solutions and transitioned to colorless over the course of the titrations. All host solutions in CHCN started as colorless and remained so over the course the titrations. The 10% DMSO/90% CHCl<sub>3</sub> spectra is more easily trackable when displayed as  $\epsilon$  instead of absorbance. All data fit with change in absorbance values.

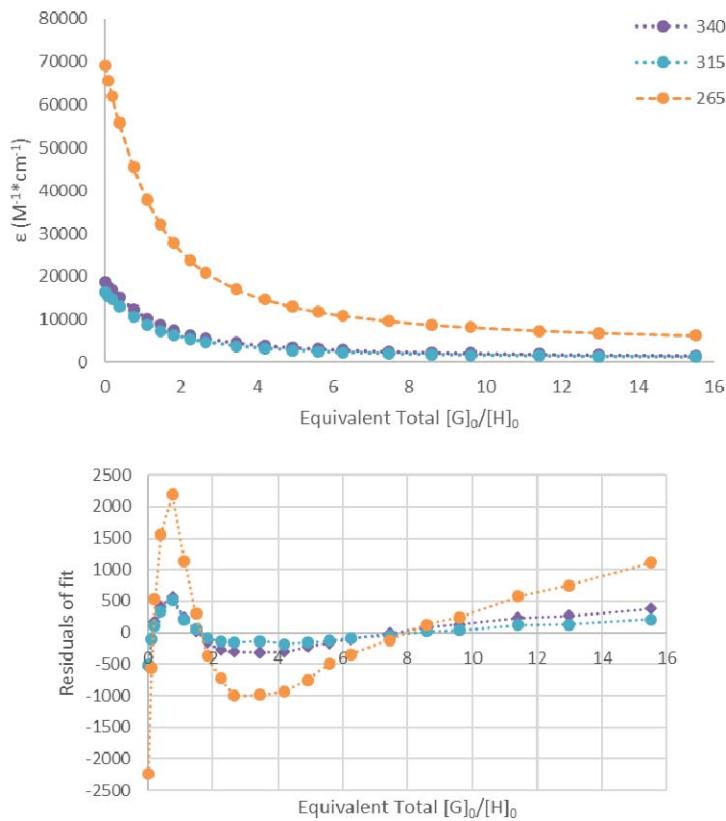
**Tetrabutylammonium dihydrogenphosphate with **1**.** A concentrated solution of **1** (2.25 mg, [R] = 0.313 mM) in 10% DMSO/CHCl<sub>3</sub> (10.00 mL) was prepared. A serial dilution was then performed with 800  $\mu$ L of 0.313 mM solution of **1** diluted to 10.00 mL to yield the stock solution of **1** ([R] = 25.0  $\mu$ M). A 3.00 mL solution of TBAH<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub> (2.14 mg, [G] = 2.10 mM) was prepared by solvation with the stock solution of **1**. A serial dilution was then performed with 1200  $\mu$ L of the 2.10 mM solution of TBAH<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub> diluted to 3.00 mL with the stock solution of **1** to yield guest solution ([G] = 8.41 mM). The starting volume in the cuvette was 2.0 mL.

**Table S1.** Representative titration data for  $\text{H}_2\text{PO}_4^-$  with **1**.

	Guest ( $\mu\text{L}$ )	[ <b>1</b> ] (M)	[ $\text{H}_2\text{PO}_4^-$ ] (M)	Equiv.
1	0	2.50E-05	0.00E+00	0.00
2	5	2.50E-05	2.39E-06	0.10
3	10	2.50E-05	4.78E-06	0.19
4	20	2.50E-05	9.50E-06	0.38
5	40	2.50E-05	1.88E-05	0.75
6	60	2.50E-05	2.79E-05	1.11
7	80	2.50E-05	3.67E-05	1.47
8	100	2.50E-05	4.54E-05	1.82
9	125	2.50E-05	5.60E-05	2.24
10	150	2.50E-05	6.64E-05	2.65
11	200	2.50E-05	8.62E-05	3.45
12	250	2.50E-05	1.05E-04	4.20
13	300	2.50E-05	1.23E-04	4.92
14	350	2.50E-05	1.40E-04	5.60
15	400	2.50E-05	1.56E-04	6.25
16	500	2.50E-05	1.87E-04	7.47
17	600	2.50E-05	2.15E-04	8.58
18	700	2.50E-05	2.40E-04	9.61
19	900	2.50E-05	2.85E-04	11.42
20	1100	2.50E-05	3.24E-04	12.98
21	1500	2.50E-05	3.88E-04	15.52



**Figure S1.** UV-Vis spectra of **1** titrated with  $\text{H}_2\text{PO}_4^-$  in 10% DMSO/CHCl<sub>3</sub>.

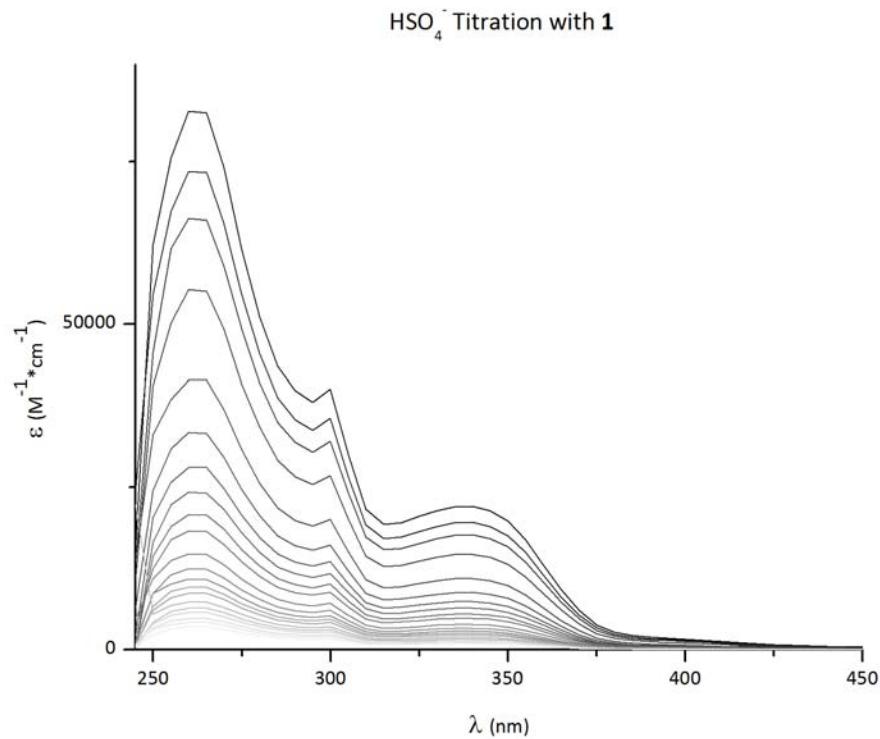


**Figure S2.** Binding isotherm and Bindfit output for  $\text{H}_2\text{PO}_4^-$  titration with **1**.

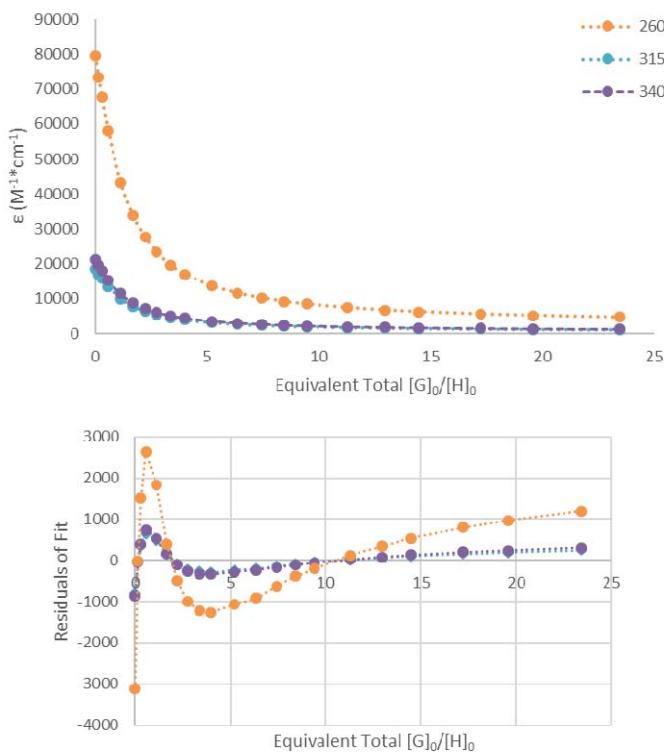
**Tetrabutylammonium hydrogensulfate with **1**.** A concentrated solution of **1** (2.25 mg,  $[R] = 0.313 \text{ mM}$ ) in 10% DMSO/CHCl<sub>3</sub> (10.00 mL) was prepared. A serial dilution was then performed with 800  $\mu\text{L}$  of 0.313 mM solution of **1** diluted to 10.00 mL to yield the stock solution of **1** ( $[R] = 25.0 \mu\text{M}$ ). A 3.00 mL solution of TBAHSO<sub>4</sub> (3.23 mg,  $[G] = 3.17 \text{ mM}$ ) was prepared by solvation with the stock solution of **1**. A serial dilution was then performed with 1200  $\mu\text{L}$  of the 3.23 mM solution of TBAHSO<sub>4</sub> diluted to 3.00 mL with the stock solution of **1** to yield guest solution ( $[G] = 12.7 \text{ mM}$ ). The starting volume in the cuvette was 2.0 mL.

**Table S2.** Representative titration data for  $\text{HSO}_4^-$  with **1**.

	Guest ( $\mu\text{L}$ )	[ <b>1</b> ] (M)	[ $\text{HSO}_4^-$ ] (M)	Equiv.
1	0	2.50E-05	0.00E+00	0.00
2	5	2.50E-05	3.61E-06	0.14
3	10	2.50E-05	7.21E-06	0.29
4	20	2.50E-05	1.43E-05	0.57
5	40	2.50E-05	2.84E-05	1.13
6	60	2.50E-05	4.21E-05	1.68
7	80	2.50E-05	5.55E-05	2.22
8	100	2.50E-05	6.86E-05	2.74
9	125	2.50E-05	8.46E-05	3.38
10	150	2.50E-05	1.00E-04	4.01
11	200	2.50E-05	1.30E-04	5.20
12	250	2.50E-05	1.59E-04	6.34
13	300	2.50E-05	1.86E-04	7.43
14	350	2.50E-05	2.11E-04	8.46
15	400	2.50E-05	2.36E-04	9.44
16	500	2.50E-05	2.82E-04	11.28
17	600	2.50E-05	3.24E-04	12.96
18	700	2.50E-05	3.62E-04	14.50
19	900	2.50E-05	4.31E-04	17.23
20	1100	2.50E-05	4.90E-04	19.58
21	1500	2.50E-05	5.86E-04	23.42



**Figure S3.** UV-Vis spectra of **1** titrated with HSO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup> in 10% DMSO/CHCl<sub>3</sub>.

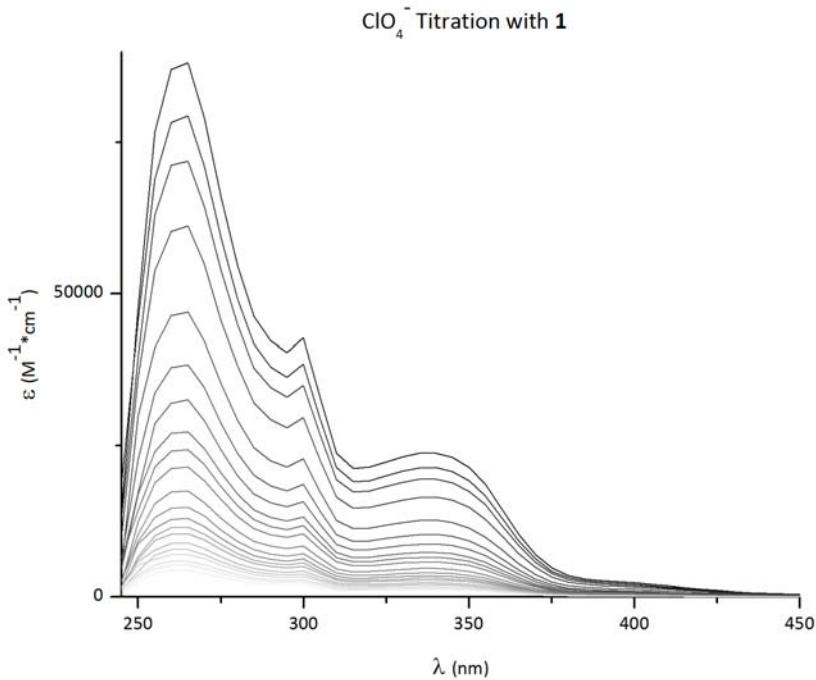


**Figure S4.** Binding isotherm and Bindfit output for HSO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup> titration with **1**.

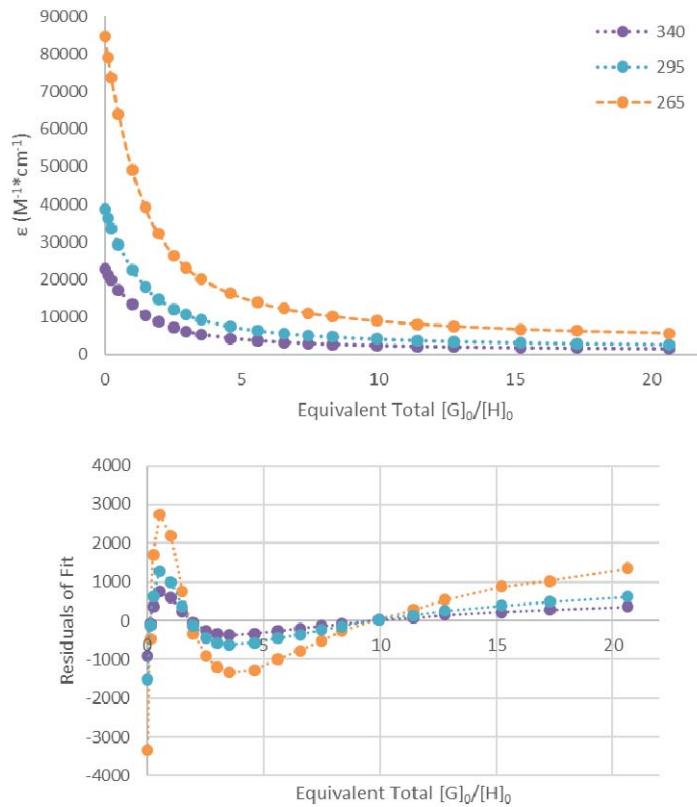
**Tetrabutylammonium perchlorate with **1**.** A concentrated solution of **1** (2.27 mg, [R] = 0.285 mM) in 10% DMSO/CHCl<sub>3</sub> (10.00 mL) was prepared. A serial dilution was then performed with 900 μL of 0.285 mM solution of **1** diluted to 10.00 mL to yield the stock solution of **1** ([R] = 25.6 μM). A 3.00 mL solution of TBAClO<sub>4</sub> (3.53 mg, [G] = 3.44 mM) was prepared by solvation with the stock solution of **1**. A serial dilution was then performed with 1000 μL of the 3.53 mM solution of TBAClO<sub>4</sub> diluted to 3.00 mL with the stock solution of **1** to yield guest solution ([G] = 11.5 mM). The starting volume in the cuvette was 2.0 mL.

**Table S3.** Representative titration data for ClO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup> with **1**.

	Guest (μL)	[ <b>1</b> ] (M)	[ClO <sub>4</sub> <sup>-</sup> ] (M)	Equiv.
1	0	2.56E-05	0.00E+00	0.00
2	5	2.56E-05	3.27E-06	0.13
3	10	2.56E-05	6.52E-06	0.25
4	20	2.56E-05	1.30E-05	0.51
5	40	2.56E-05	2.56E-05	1.00
6	60	2.56E-05	3.80E-05	1.48
7	80	2.56E-05	5.01E-05	1.96
8	105	2.56E-05	6.49E-05	2.53
9	125	2.56E-05	7.65E-05	2.98
10	150	2.56E-05	9.06E-05	3.53
11	200	2.56E-05	1.18E-04	4.59
12	250	2.56E-05	1.43E-04	5.59
13	300	2.56E-05	1.68E-04	6.55
14	350	2.56E-05	1.91E-04	7.46
15	400	2.56E-05	2.13E-04	8.33
16	500	2.56E-05	2.55E-04	9.94
17	600	2.56E-05	2.93E-04	11.43
18	700	2.56E-05	3.28E-04	12.79
19	900	2.56E-05	3.90E-04	15.20
20	1100	2.56E-05	4.43E-04	17.27
21	1500	2.56E-05	5.29E-04	20.65



**Figure S5.** UV-Vis spectra of **1** titrated with ClO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup> in 10% DMSO/CHCl<sub>3</sub>.

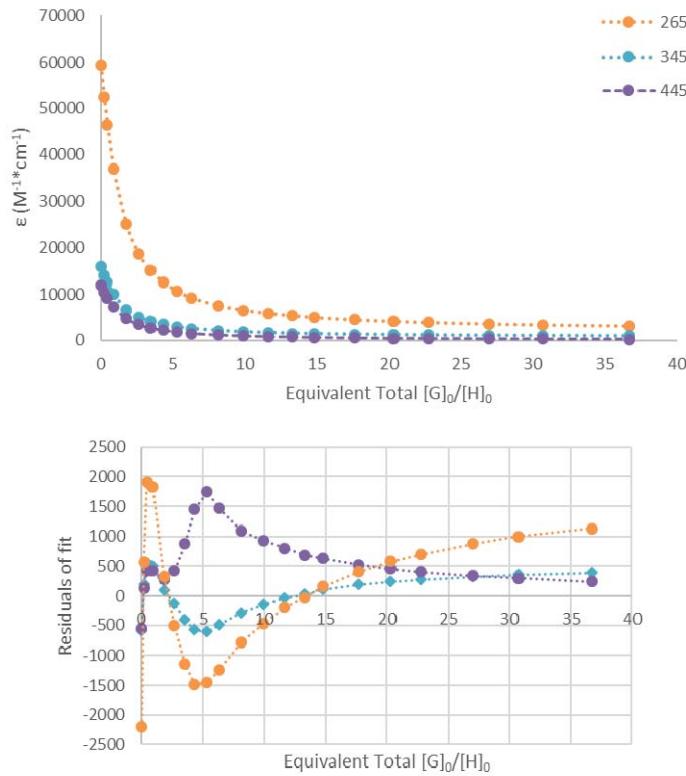


**Figure S6.** Binding isotherm and Bindfit output for ClO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup> titration with **1**.

**Tetrabutylammonium dihydrogenphosphate with **2**.** A concentrated solution of **2** (2.23 mg,  $[R] = 0.310 \text{ mM}$ ) in 10% DMSO/CHCl<sub>3</sub> (10.00 mL) was prepared. A serial dilution was then performed with 800  $\mu\text{L}$  of 0.310 mM solution of **2** diluted to 10.00 mL to yield the stock solution of **2** ( $[R] = 24.7 \text{ }\mu\text{M}$ ). A 3.00 mL solution of TBAH<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub> (2.02 mg,  $[G] = 1.97 \text{ mM}$ ) was prepared by solvation with the stock solution of **2** to prepare guest solution. The starting volume in the cuvette was 2.0 mL.

**Table S4.** Representative titration data for H<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup> with **2**.

	Guest ( $\mu\text{L}$ )	[ <b>2</b> ] (M)	[H <sub>2</sub> PO <sub>4</sub> <sup>-</sup> ] (M)	Equiv.
1	0	2.48E-05	0.00E+00	0.00
2	5	2.48E-05	5.61E-06	0.23
3	10	2.48E-05	1.12E-05	0.45
4	20	2.48E-05	2.23E-05	0.90
5	40	2.48E-05	4.40E-05	1.78
6	60	2.48E-05	6.53E-05	2.64
7	80	2.48E-05	8.62E-05	3.48
8	100	2.48E-05	1.07E-04	4.30
9	125	2.48E-05	1.31E-04	5.30
10	150	2.48E-05	1.56E-04	6.28
11	200	2.48E-05	2.02E-04	8.16
12	250	2.48E-05	2.46E-04	9.94
13	300	2.48E-05	2.88E-04	11.64
14	350	2.48E-05	3.28E-04	13.25
15	400	2.48E-05	3.67E-04	14.80
16	500	2.48E-05	4.38E-04	17.67
17	600	2.48E-05	5.03E-04	20.30
18	700	2.48E-05	5.63E-04	22.72
19	900	2.48E-05	6.69E-04	27.01
20	1100	2.48E-05	7.61E-04	30.69
21	1500	2.48E-05	9.10E-04	36.70

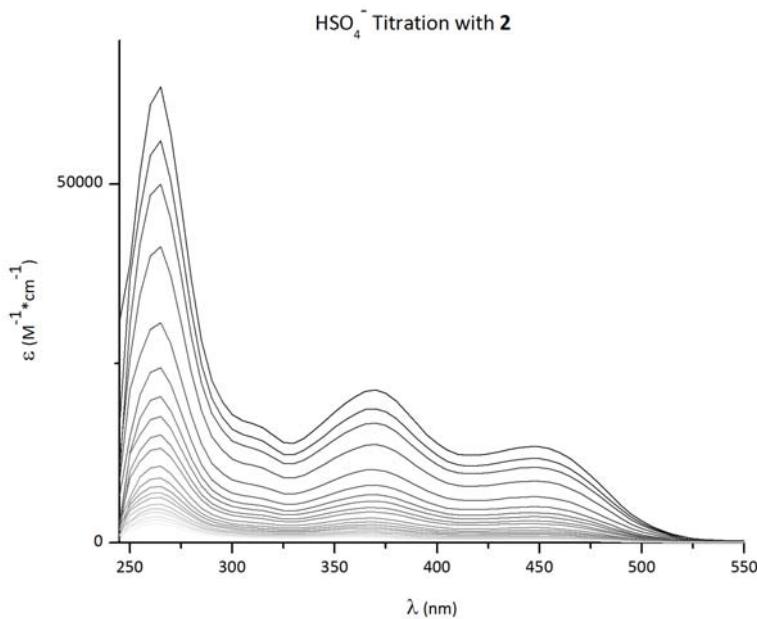


**Figure S7.** Binding isotherm and Bindfit output for  $\text{H}_2\text{PO}_4^-$  titration with **2**.

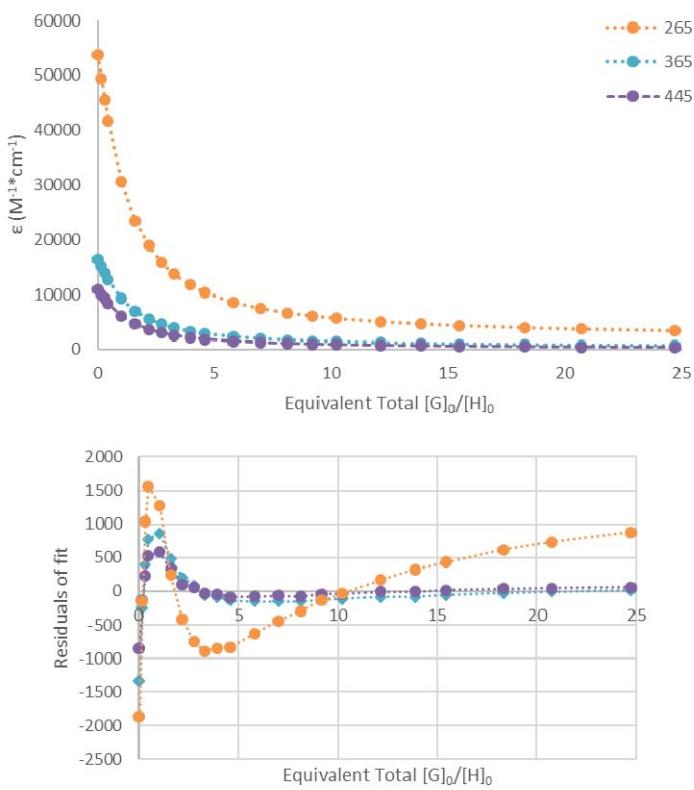
**Tetrabutylammonium hydrogensulfate with **2**.** A concentrated solution of **2** (2.58 mg,  $[R] = 0.358 \text{ mM}$ ) in 10% DMSO/CHCl<sub>3</sub> (10.00 mL) was prepared. A serial dilution was then performed with 700  $\mu\text{L}$  of 0.358 mM solution of **2** diluted to 10.00 mL to yield the stock solution of **2** ( $[R] = 25.1 \mu\text{M}$ ). A 3.00 mL solution of TBAHSO<sub>4</sub> (2.27 mg,  $[G] = 1.34 \text{ mM}$ ) was prepared by solvation with the stock solution of **2** to yield the guest solution. The starting volume in the cuvette was 2.0 mL.

**Table S5.** Representative titration data for  $\text{HSO}_4^-$  with **2**.

	Guest ( $\mu\text{L}$ )	[2] (M)	[ $\text{HSO}_4^-$ ] (M)	Equiv.
1	0	2.51E-05	0.00E+00	0.00
2	5	2.51E-05	3.81E-06	0.15
3	10	2.51E-05	7.60E-06	0.30
4	15	2.51E-05	1.14E-05	0.45
5	35	2.51E-05	2.62E-05	1.05
6	55	2.51E-05	4.07E-05	1.62
7	75	2.51E-05	5.50E-05	2.19
8	95	2.51E-05	6.89E-05	2.74
9	115	2.51E-05	8.25E-05	3.29
10	140	2.51E-05	9.90E-05	3.95
11	165	2.51E-05	1.15E-04	4.59
12	215	2.51E-05	1.46E-04	5.83
13	265	2.51E-05	1.76E-04	7.01
14	315	2.51E-05	2.04E-04	8.13
15	365	2.51E-05	2.31E-04	9.20
16	415	2.51E-05	2.56E-04	10.22
17	515	2.51E-05	3.04E-04	12.12
18	615	2.51E-05	3.48E-04	13.86
19	715	2.51E-05	3.88E-04	15.46
20	915	2.51E-05	4.59E-04	18.30
21	1115	2.51E-05	5.20E-04	20.74



**Figure S8.** UV-Vis spectra of **2** titrated with  $\text{HSO}_4^-$  in 10% DMSO/CHCl<sub>3</sub>.

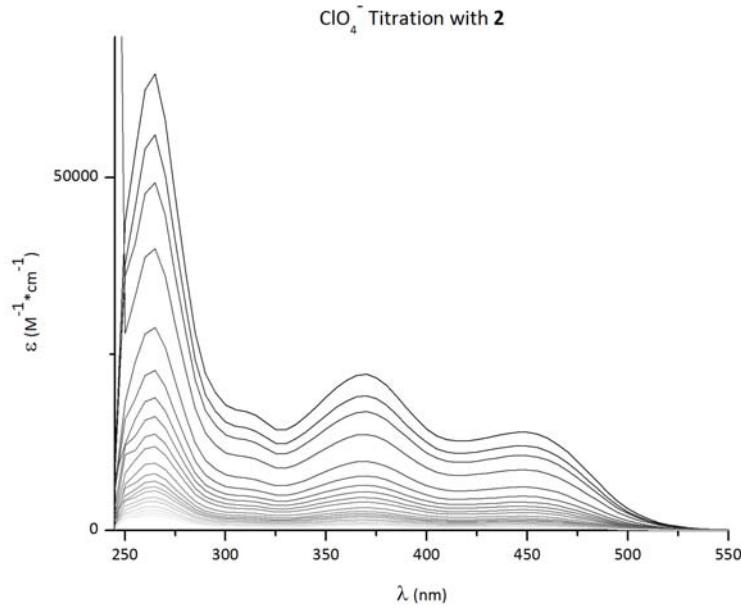


**Figure S9.** Binding isotherm and Bindfit output for  $\text{HSO}_4^-$  titration with **2**.

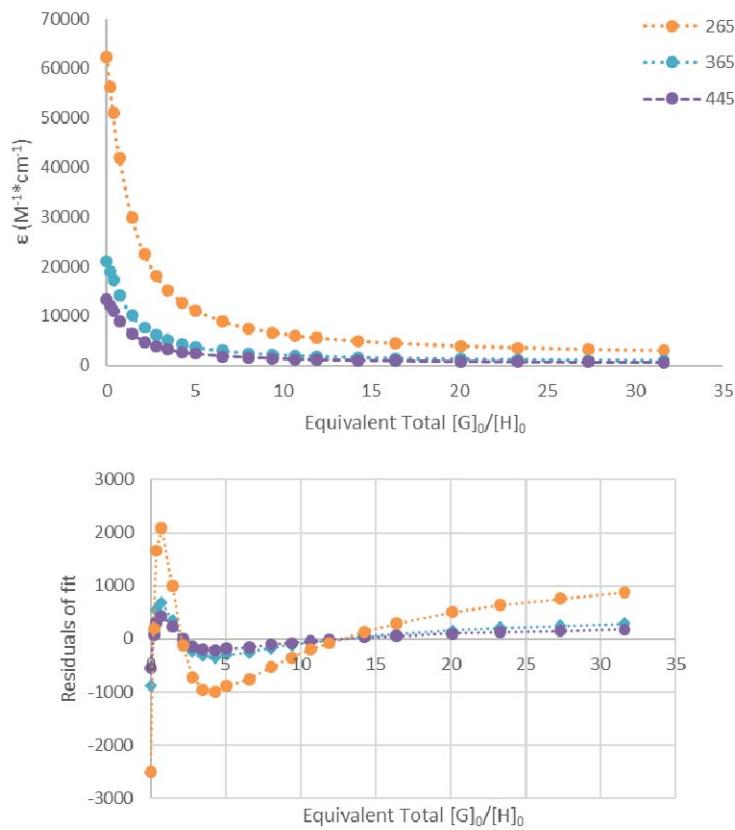
**Tetrabutylammonium perchlorate with **2**.** A concentrated solution of **2** (2.58 mg, [R] = 0.358 mM) in 10% DMSO/CHCl<sub>3</sub> (10.00 mL) was prepared. A serial dilution was then performed with 6500 μL of 0.358 mM solution of **2** diluted to 10.00 mL to yield the stock solution of **2** ([R] = 23.3 μM). A 3.00 mL solution of TBAClO<sub>4</sub> (2.79 mg, [G] = 1.63 mM) was prepared by solvation with the stock solution of **2** to yield the guest solution. The starting volume in the cuvette was 2.0 mL.

**Table S6.** Representative titration data for ClO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup> with **2**.

	Guest (μL)	[2] (M)	[ClO <sub>4</sub> <sup>-</sup> ] (M)	Equiv.
1	0	2.33E-05	0.00E+00	0.00
2	5	2.33E-05	4.65E-06	0.20
3	10	2.33E-05	9.27E-06	0.40
4	20	2.33E-05	1.84E-05	0.79
5	40	2.33E-05	3.65E-05	1.57
6	60	2.33E-05	5.41E-05	2.32
7	85	2.33E-05	7.56E-05	3.25
8	100	2.33E-05	8.82E-05	3.79
9	125	2.33E-05	1.09E-04	4.67
10	150	2.33E-05	1.29E-04	5.53
11	200	2.33E-05	1.67E-04	7.19
12	250	2.33E-05	2.04E-04	8.76
13	300	2.33E-05	2.39E-04	10.25
14	350	2.33E-05	2.72E-04	11.68
15	450	2.33E-05	3.34E-04	14.33
16	550	2.33E-05	3.90E-04	16.75
17	700	2.33E-05	4.66E-04	20.02
18	900	2.33E-05	5.54E-04	23.79
19	1100	2.33E-05	6.30E-04	27.04
20	1400	2.33E-05	7.25E-04	31.14
21	1800	2.33E-05	8.27E-04	35.52



**Figure S10.** UV-Vis spectra of **2** titrated with ClO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup> in 10% DMSO/CHCl<sub>3</sub>.

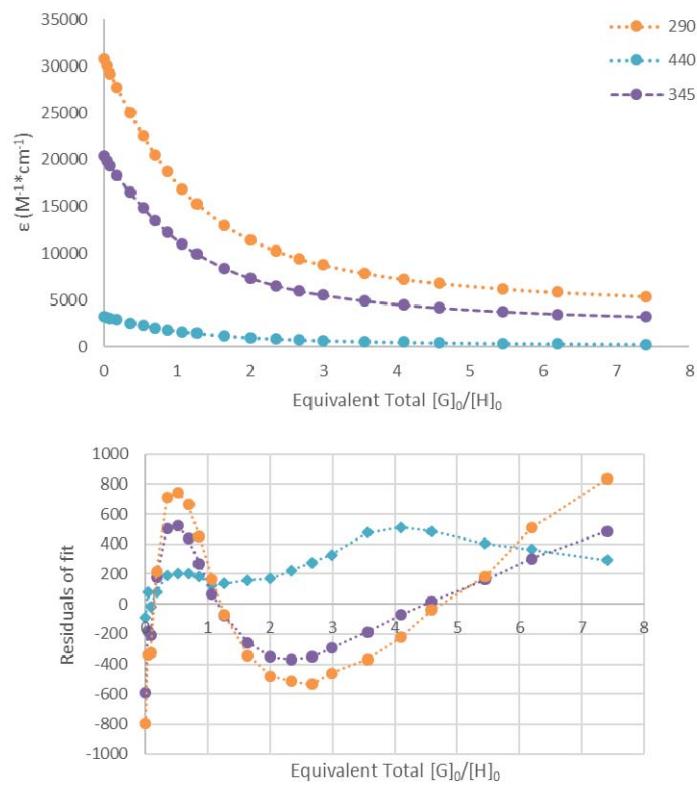


**Figure S11.** Binding isotherm and Bindfit output for ClO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup> titration with **2**.

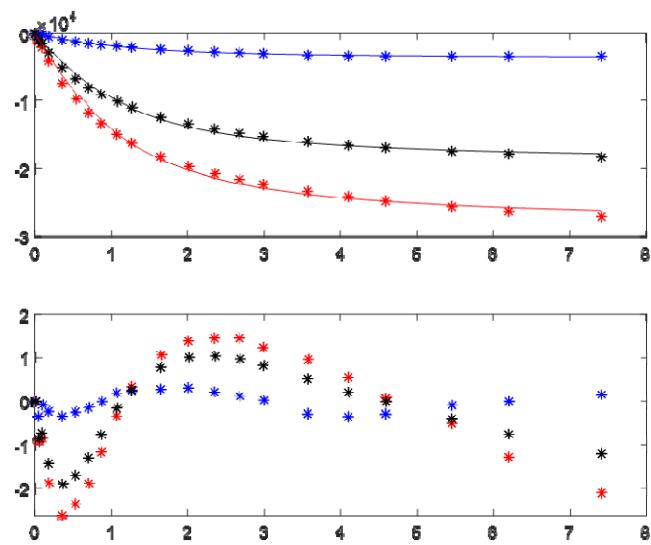
**Tetrabutylammonium dihydrogenphosphate with **3**.** A concentrated solution of **3** (2.05 mg,  $[R] = 0.257 \text{ mM}$ ) in 10% DMSO/CHCl<sub>3</sub> (10.00 mL) was prepared. A serial dilution was then performed with 975  $\mu\text{L}$  of 0.257 mM solution of **3** diluted to 10.00 mL to yield the stock solution of **3** ( $[R] = 25.1 \mu\text{M}$ ). A 3.00 mL solution of TBAH<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub> (2.46 mg,  $[G] = 2.42 \text{ mM}$ ) was prepared by solvation with the stock solution of **3**. A serial dilution was then performed with 500  $\mu\text{L}$  of the 2.42 mM solution of TBAH<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub> diluted to 3.00 mL with the stock solution of **3** to yield guest solution ( $[G] = 4.03 \text{ mM}$ ). The starting volume in the cuvette was 2.0 mL.

**Table S7.** Representative titration data for H<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup> with **3**.

	Guest ( $\mu\text{L}$ )	[ <b>3</b> ] (M)	[H <sub>2</sub> PO <sub>4</sub> <sup>-</sup> ] (M)	Equiv.
1	0	2.51E-05	0.00E+00	0.00
2	5	2.51E-05	1.15E-06	0.05
3	10	2.51E-05	2.29E-06	0.09
4	20	2.51E-05	4.55E-06	0.18
5	40	2.51E-05	9.00E-06	0.36
6	60	2.51E-05	1.33E-05	0.53
7	80	2.51E-05	1.76E-05	0.70
8	100	2.51E-05	2.18E-05	0.87
9	125	2.51E-05	2.68E-05	1.07
10	150	2.51E-05	3.18E-05	1.27
11	200	2.51E-05	4.13E-05	1.65
12	250	2.51E-05	5.03E-05	2.01
13	300	2.51E-05	5.89E-05	2.35
14	350	2.51E-05	6.71E-05	2.68
15	400	2.51E-05	7.49E-05	2.99
16	500	2.51E-05	8.95E-05	3.57
17	600	2.51E-05	1.03E-04	4.10
18	700	2.51E-05	1.15E-04	4.59
19	900	2.51E-05	1.37E-04	5.45
20	1100	2.51E-05	1.55E-04	6.20
21	1500	2.51E-05	1.86E-04	7.41



**Figure S12.** Binding isotherm and Bindfit output for  $H_2PO_4^-$  titration with **3**.

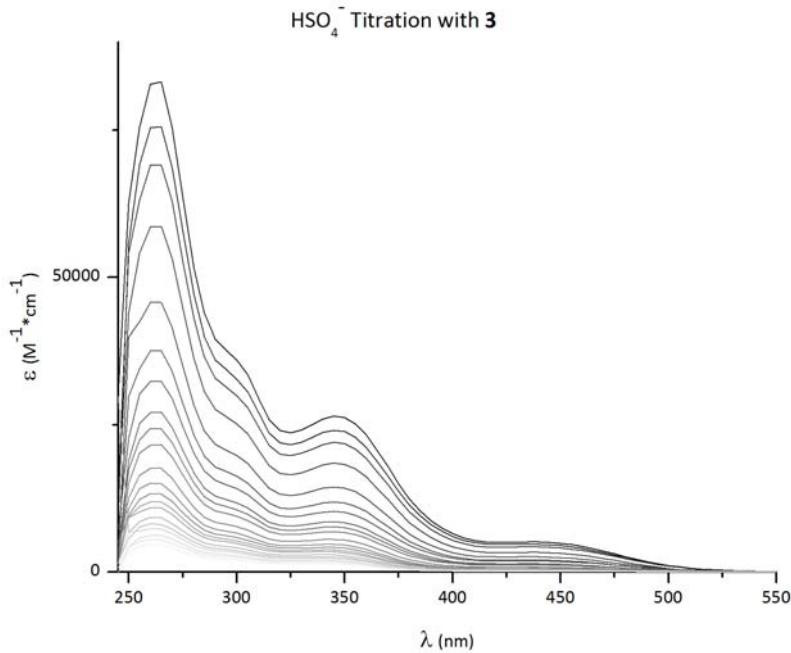


**Figure S13.** MatLab fit of binding isotherm for  $H_2PO_4^-$  titration with **3**.

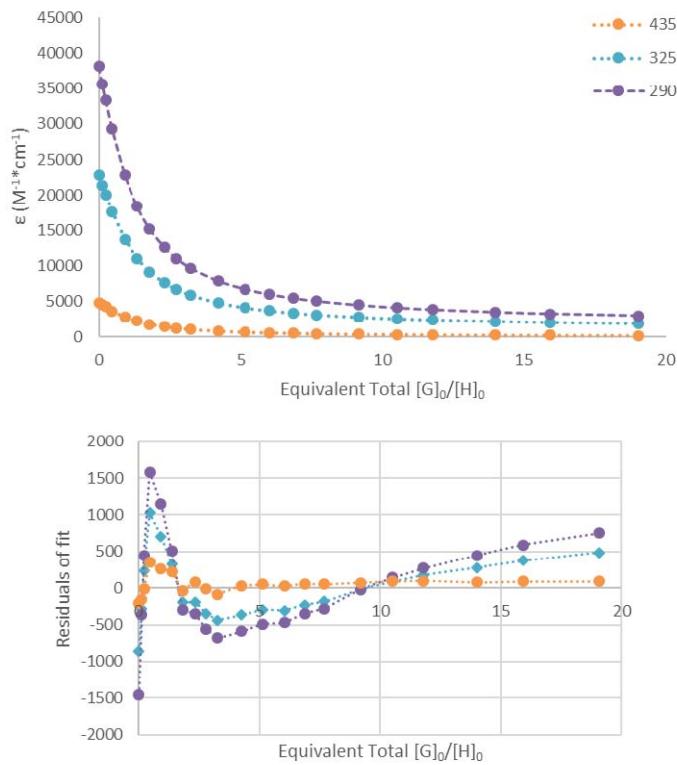
**Tetrabutylammonium hydrogensulfate with **3**.** A concentrated solution of **3** (2.27 mg,  $[R] = 0.285 \text{ mM}$ ) in 10% DMSO/CHCl<sub>3</sub> (10.00 mL) was prepared. A serial dilution was then performed with 800  $\mu\text{L}$  of 0.285 mM solution of **3** diluted to 10.00 mL to yield the stock solution of **3** ( $[R] = 22.8 \mu\text{M}$ ). A 3.00 mL solution of TBAHSO<sub>4</sub> (2.87 mg,  $[G] = 2.82 \text{ mM}$ ) was prepared by solvation with the stock solution of **3**. A serial dilution was then performed with 1000  $\mu\text{L}$  of the 2.82 mM solution of TBAHSO<sub>4</sub> diluted to 3.00 mL with the stock solution of **3** to yield guest solution ( $[G] = 9.39 \text{ mM}$ ). The starting volume in the cuvette was 2.0 mL.

**Table S8.** Representative titration data for HSO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup> with **3**.

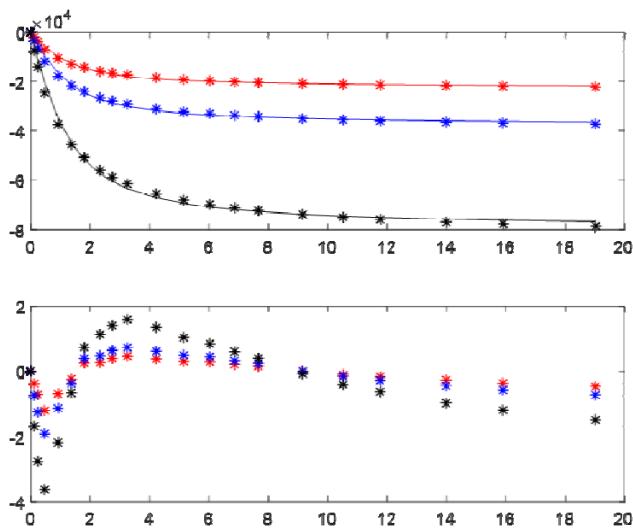
	Guest ( $\mu\text{L}$ )	[ <b>3</b> ] (M)	[HSO <sub>4</sub> <sup>-</sup> ] (M)	Equiv.
1	0	2.28E-05	0.00E+00	0.00
2	5	2.28E-05	2.68E-06	0.12
3	10	2.28E-05	5.34E-06	0.23
4	20	2.28E-05	1.06E-05	0.47
5	40	2.28E-05	2.10E-05	0.92
6	60	2.28E-05	3.11E-05	1.37
7	80	2.28E-05	4.11E-05	1.80
8	105	2.28E-05	5.32E-05	2.33
9	125	2.28E-05	6.26E-05	2.75
10	150	2.28E-05	7.41E-05	3.25
11	200	2.28E-05	9.63E-05	4.23
12	250	2.28E-05	1.17E-04	5.15
13	300	2.28E-05	1.37E-04	6.03
14	350	2.28E-05	1.57E-04	6.87
15	400	2.28E-05	1.75E-04	7.67
16	500	2.28E-05	2.09E-04	9.16
17	600	2.28E-05	2.40E-04	10.52
18	700	2.28E-05	2.68E-04	11.78
19	900	2.28E-05	3.19E-04	14.00
20	1100	2.28E-05	3.63E-04	15.91
21	1500	2.28E-05	4.33E-04	19.02



**Figure S14.** UV-Vis spectra of **3** titrated with HSO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup> in 10% DMSO/CHCl<sub>3</sub>.



**Figure S15.** Binding isotherm and Bindfit output for HSO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup> titration with **3**.

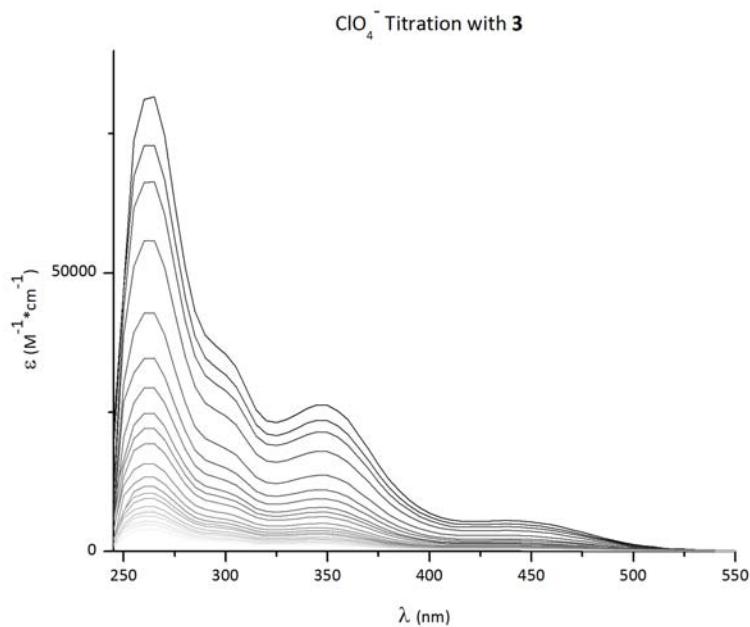


**Figure S16.** MatLab fit of binding isotherm for  $\text{HSO}_4^-$  titration with **3**.

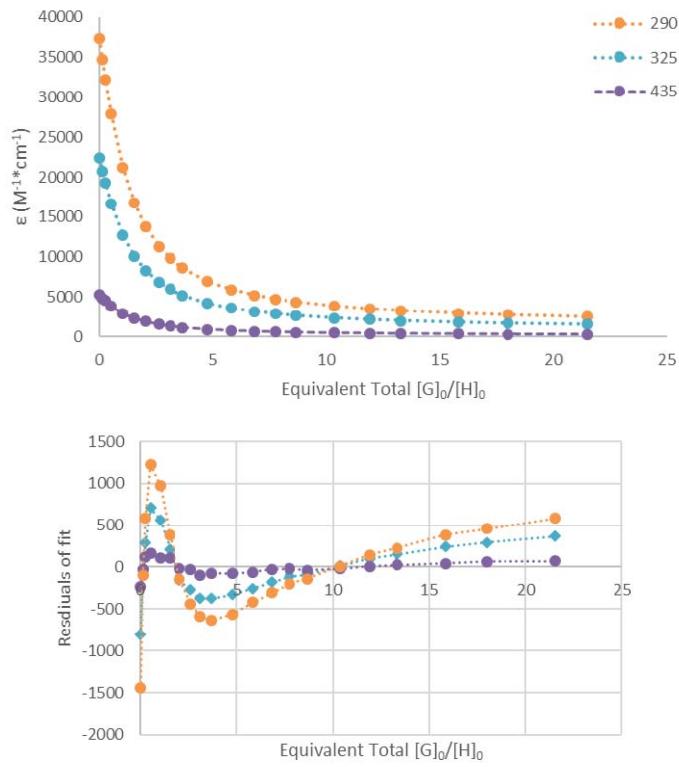
**Tetrabutylammonium perchlorate with **3**.** A concentrated solution of **3** (2.27 mg,  $[R] = 0.285$  mM) in 10% DMSO/CHCl<sub>3</sub> (10.00 mL) was prepared. A serial dilution was then performed with 900  $\mu\text{L}$  of 0.285 mM solution of **3** diluted to 10.00 mL to yield the stock solution of **3** ( $[R] = 25.6 \mu\text{M}$ ). A 2.00 mL solution of TBAClO<sub>4</sub> (3.50 mg,  $[G] = 5.12$  mM) was prepared by solvation with the stock solution of **3**. A serial dilution was then performed with 700  $\mu\text{L}$  of the 5.12 mM solution of TBAClO<sub>4</sub> diluted to 3.00 mL with the stock solution of **3** to yield guest solution ( $[G] = 11.9$  mM). The starting volume in the cuvette was 2.0 mL.

**Table S9.** Representative titration data for  $\text{ClO}_4^-$  with **3**.

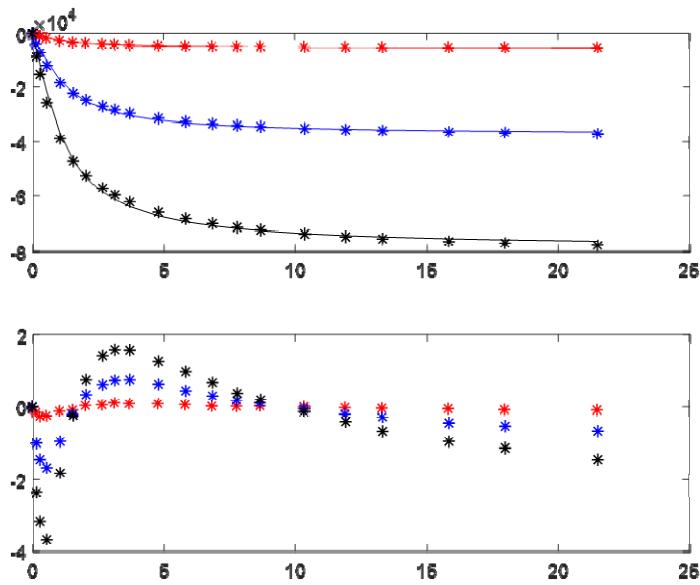
	Guest ( $\mu\text{L}$ )	[ <b>3</b> ] (M)	[ $\text{ClO}_4^-$ ] (M)	Equiv.
1	0	2.56E-05	0.00E+00	0.00
2	5	2.56E-05	3.40E-06	0.13
3	10	2.56E-05	6.79E-06	0.26
4	20	2.56E-05	1.35E-05	0.53
5	40	2.56E-05	2.67E-05	1.04
6	60	2.56E-05	3.96E-05	1.54
7	80	2.56E-05	5.22E-05	2.04
8	105	2.56E-05	6.76E-05	2.64
9	125	2.56E-05	7.96E-05	3.11
10	150	2.56E-05	9.43E-05	3.68
11	200	2.56E-05	1.22E-04	4.78
12	250	2.56E-05	1.49E-04	5.82
13	300	2.56E-05	1.75E-04	6.82
14	350	2.56E-05	1.99E-04	7.76
15	400	2.56E-05	2.22E-04	8.67
16	500	2.56E-05	2.65E-04	10.35
17	600	2.56E-05	3.05E-04	11.89
18	700	2.56E-05	3.41E-04	13.31
19	900	2.56E-05	4.06E-04	15.82
20	1100	2.56E-05	4.61E-04	17.98
21	1500	2.56E-05	5.51E-04	21.50



**Figure S17.** UV-Vis spectra of **3** titrated with  $\text{ClO}_4^-$  in 10% DMSO/CHCl<sub>3</sub>.



**Figure S18.** Binding isotherm and Bindfit output for  $\text{ClO}_4^-$  titration with **3**.



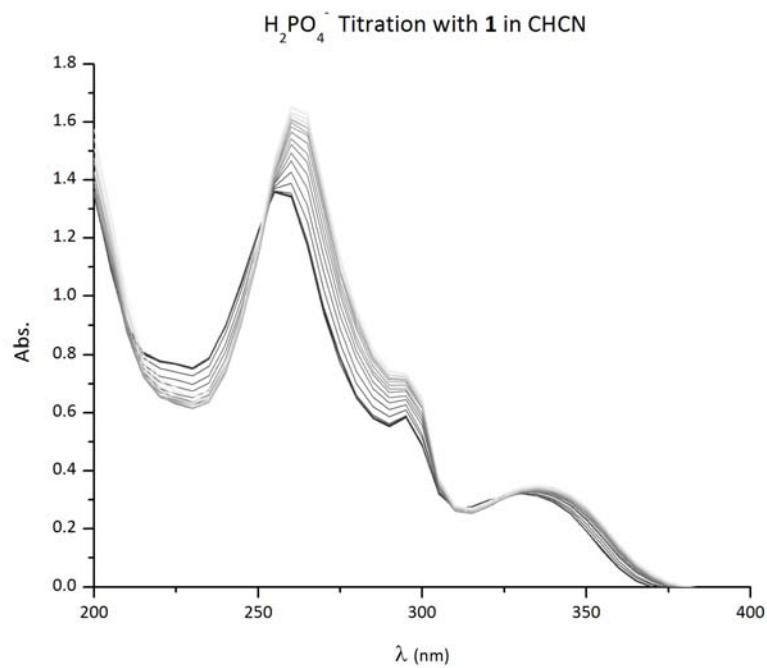
**Figure S19.** MatLab fit of binding isotherm for  $\text{ClO}_4^-$  titration with **3**.

**Acetonitrile titrations:**

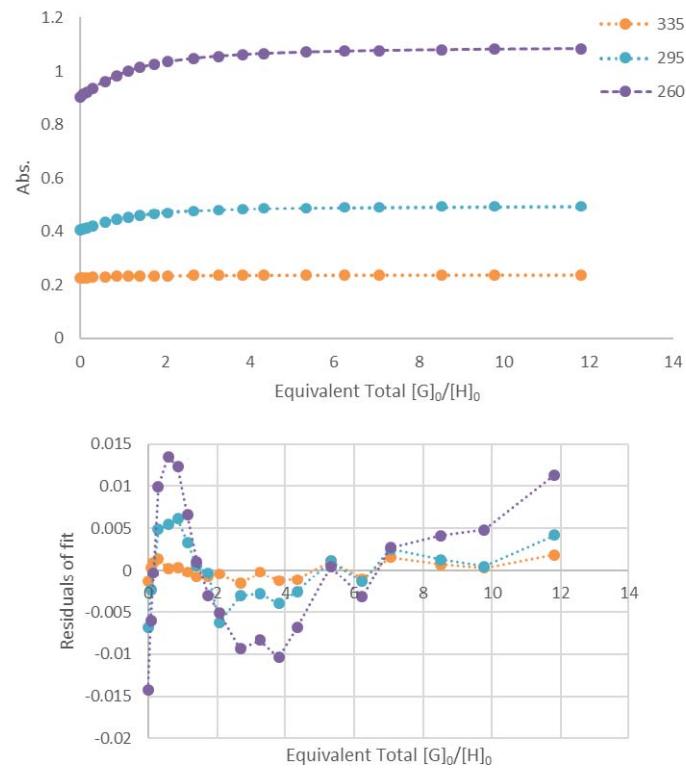
**Tetrabutylammonium dihydrogenphosphate with **1**.** A concentrated solution of **1** (2.43 mg,  $[R] = 0.338 \text{ mM}$ ) in CHCN (10.00 mL) was prepared. A serial dilution was then performed with 600  $\mu\text{L}$  of 0.338 mM solution of **1** diluted to 10.00 mL to yield the stock solution of **1** ( $[R] = 20.3 \text{ }\mu\text{M}$ ). A 3.00 mL solution of TBAH<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub> (2.80 mg,  $[G] = 2.75 \text{ mM}$ ) was prepared by solvation with the stock solution of **1**. A serial dilution was then performed with 350  $\mu\text{L}$  of the 2.75 mM solution of TBAH<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub> diluted to 2.00 mL with the stock solution of **1** to yield guest solution ( $[G] = 0.481 \text{ mM}$ ). The starting volume in the cuvette was 2.0 mL.

**Table S10.** Representative titration data for H<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup> with **1**.

	Guest ( $\mu\text{L}$ )	[ <b>1</b> ] (M)	[H <sub>2</sub> PO <sub>4</sub> <sup>-</sup> ] (M)	Equiv.
1	0	2.03E-05	0.00E+00	0.00
2	5	2.03E-05	1.37E-06	0.07
3	10	2.03E-05	2.73E-06	0.13
4	20	2.03E-05	5.44E-06	0.27
5	40	2.03E-05	1.08E-05	0.53
6	60	2.03E-05	1.60E-05	0.79
7	80	2.03E-05	2.10E-05	1.04
8	100	2.03E-05	2.60E-05	1.28
9	125	2.03E-05	3.21E-05	1.58
10	150	2.03E-05	3.80E-05	1.88
11	200	2.03E-05	4.94E-05	2.44
12	250	2.03E-05	6.01E-05	2.97
13	300	2.03E-05	7.04E-05	3.48
14	350	2.03E-05	8.02E-05	3.96
15	400	2.03E-05	8.95E-05	4.42
16	500	2.03E-05	1.07E-04	5.28
17	600	2.03E-05	1.23E-04	6.07
18	700	2.03E-05	1.37E-04	6.79
19	900	2.03E-05	1.63E-04	8.07
20	1100	2.03E-05	1.86E-04	9.17
21	1500	2.03E-05	2.22E-04	10.97



**Figure S20.** UV-Vis spectra of **1** titrated with  $\text{H}_2\text{PO}_4^-$  in CHCN.

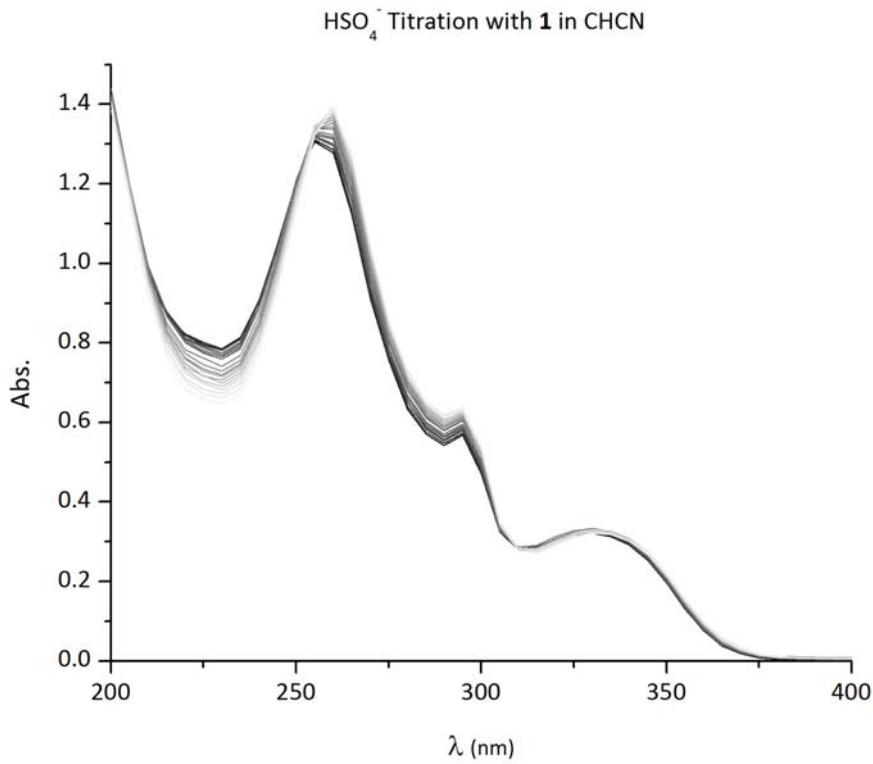


**Figure S21.** Binding isotherm and Bindfit output for  $\text{H}_2\text{PO}_4^-$  titration with **1**.

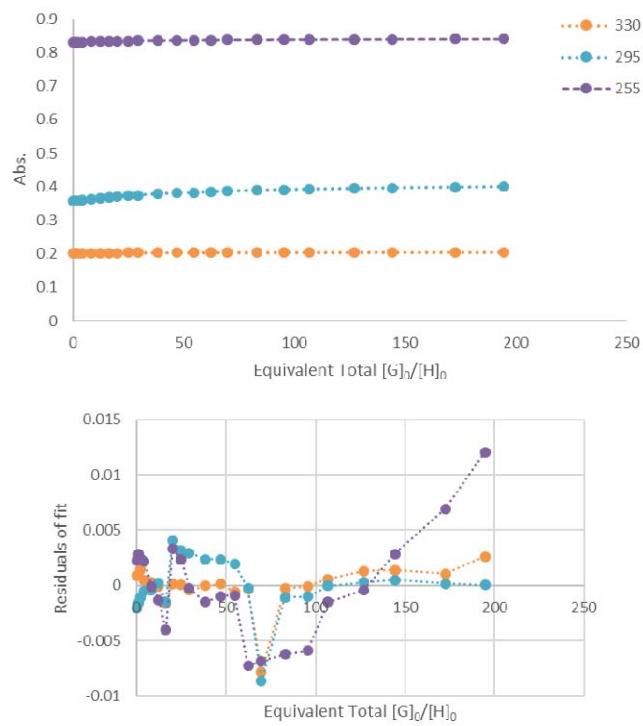
**Tetrabutylammonium hydrogensulfate with **1**.** A concentrated solution of **1** (2.43 mg, [R] = 0.338 mM) in CHCN (10.00 mL) was prepared. A serial dilution was then performed with 500  $\mu$ L of 0.338 mM solution of **1** diluted to 10.00 mL to yield the stock solution of **1** ([R] = 16.9  $\mu$ M). A 2.015 mL solution of TBAHSO<sub>4</sub> (6.54 mg, [G] = 9.56 mM) was prepared by solvation with the stock solution of **1**. A serial dilution was then performed with 1400  $\mu$ L of the 9.56 mM solution of TBAHSO<sub>4</sub> diluted to 3.046 mL with the stock solution of **1** to yield guest solution ([G] = 4.39 mM). The starting volume in the cuvette was 2.0 mL.

**Table S11.** Representative titration data for HSO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup> with **1**.

	Guest ( $\mu$ L)	[ <b>1</b> ] (M)	[HSO <sub>4</sub> <sup>-</sup> ] (M)	Equiv.
1	0	1.69E-05	0.00E+00	0.00
2	5	1.69E-05	1.25E-05	0.74
3	10	1.69E-05	2.50E-05	1.48
4	20	1.69E-05	4.97E-05	2.94
5	40	1.69E-05	9.82E-05	5.82
6	60	1.69E-05	1.46E-04	8.63
7	80	1.69E-05	1.92E-04	11.38
8	100	1.69E-05	2.38E-04	14.07
9	125	1.69E-05	2.93E-04	17.36
10	150	1.69E-05	3.47E-04	20.56
11	200	1.69E-05	4.51E-04	26.71
12	250	1.69E-05	5.49E-04	32.55
13	300	1.69E-05	6.43E-04	38.11
14	350	1.69E-05	7.32E-04	43.40
15	400	1.69E-05	8.18E-04	48.44
16	500	1.69E-05	9.77E-04	57.86
17	600	1.69E-05	1.12E-03	66.48
18	700	1.69E-05	1.26E-03	74.40
19	900	1.69E-05	1.49E-03	88.43
20	1100	1.69E-05	1.70E-03	100.50
21	1500	1.69E-05	2.03E-03	120.18
22	1900	1.69E-05	2.29E-03	135.54
23	2300	1.69E-05	2.50E-03	147.87



**Figure S22.** UV-Vis spectra of **1** titrated with HSO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup> in CHCN.

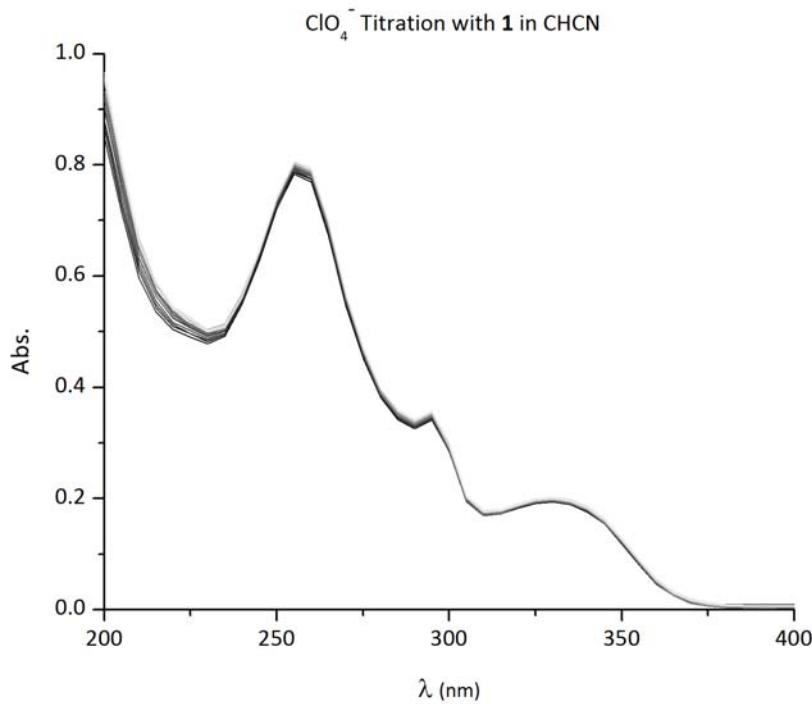


**Figure S23.** Binding isotherm and Bindfit output for HSO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup> titration with **1**.

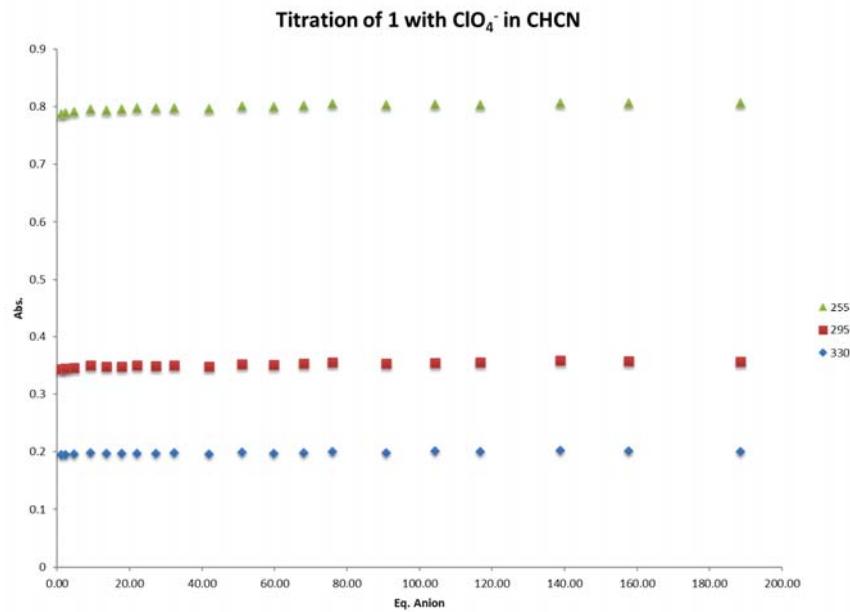
**Tetrabutylammonium perchlorate with **1**.** A concentrated solution of **1** (2.43 mg, [R] = 0.338 mM) in CHCN (10.00 mL) was prepared. A serial dilution was then performed with 300  $\mu$ L of 0.338 mM solution of **1** diluted to 10.00 mL to yield the stock solution of **1** ([R] = 10.1  $\mu$ M). A 2.00 mL solution of TBAClO<sub>4</sub> (6.53 mg, [G] = 9.55 mM) was prepared by solvation with the stock solution of **1**. A serial dilution was then performed with 1300  $\mu$ L of the 9.55 mM solution of TBAClO<sub>4</sub> diluted to 3.00 mL with the stock solution of **1** to yield guest solution ([G] = 4.14 mM). The starting volume in the cuvette was 2.0 mL.

**Table S12.** Representative titration data for ClO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup> with **1**.

	Guest ( $\mu$ L)	[ <b>1</b> ] (M)	[ClO <sub>4</sub> <sup>-</sup> ] (M)	Equiv.
1	0	1.01E-05	0.00E+00	0.00
2	5	1.01E-05	1.18E-05	1.16
3	10	1.01E-05	2.35E-05	2.32
4	20	1.01E-05	4.68E-05	4.62
5	40	1.01E-05	9.25E-05	9.13
6	60	1.01E-05	1.37E-04	13.55
7	80	1.01E-05	1.81E-04	17.86
8	100	1.01E-05	2.24E-04	22.09
9	125	1.01E-05	2.76E-04	27.24
10	150	1.01E-05	3.27E-04	32.26
11	200	1.01E-05	4.24E-04	41.91
12	250	1.01E-05	5.17E-04	51.08
13	300	1.01E-05	6.06E-04	59.80
14	350	1.01E-05	6.90E-04	68.11
15	400	1.01E-05	7.70E-04	76.02
16	500	1.01E-05	9.20E-04	90.81
17	600	1.01E-05	1.06E-03	104.33
18	700	1.01E-05	1.18E-03	116.75
19	900	1.01E-05	1.41E-03	138.78
20	1100	1.01E-05	1.60E-03	157.72
21	1500	1.01E-05	1.91E-03	188.60



**Figure S24.** UV-Vis spectra of **1** titrated with ClO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup> in CHCN.



**Figure S25.** Binding isotherm ClO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup> titration with **1**. The change in absorbance is negligible.

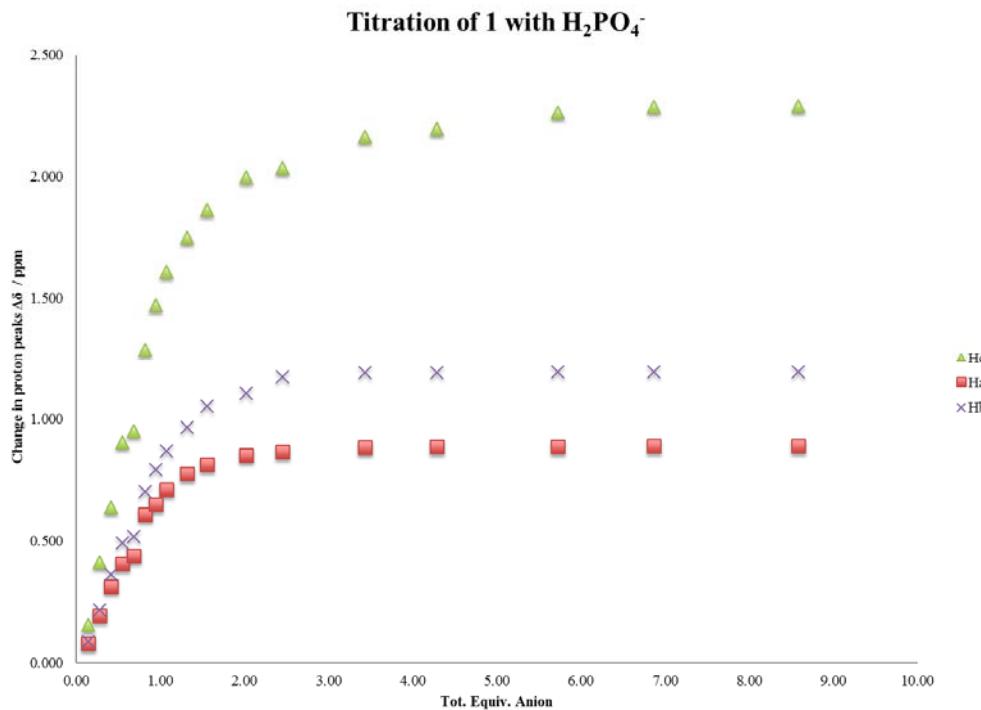
Fitting the data across a series of titrations with ClO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup> in CHCN resulted in an error for  $K_a$  value.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR Titration Conditions.** <sup>1</sup>H NMR titrations were carried out on an Inova 500 MHz NMR spectrometer (<sup>1</sup>H: 500.10 MHz). Chemical shifts ( $\delta$ ) are expressed in ppm downfield from tetramethylsilane (TMS) using non-deuterated solvent present in the bulk deuterated solvent (CDCl<sub>3</sub>, <sup>1</sup>H 7.26 ppm; *d*<sub>6</sub>-DMSO: <sup>1</sup>H 2.50 ppm). Mixed solvent systems were referenced to the most abundant solvent. All NMR spectra were processed using MestReNova NMR processing software. Association constants were determined using step-wise non-linear regression fitting in MatLab.<sup>4</sup>

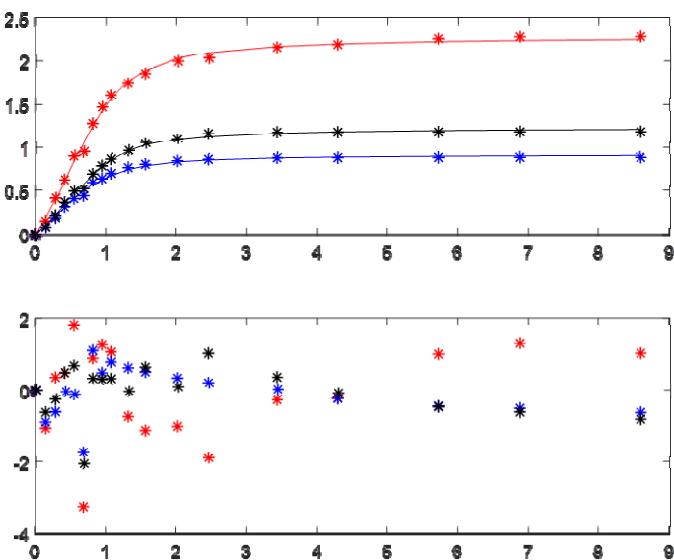
**Tetrabutylammonium dihydrogenphosphate with 1.** A concentrated solution of 1 (2.09 mg, [R] = 0.968 mM) in 10% *d*<sub>6</sub>-DMSO/CDCl<sub>3</sub> (3.00 mL) was prepared to yield the stock solution of 1. This solution (2.34 mL) was used in the dilution of TBAH<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub> guest solution (12.84 mg, [G] = 16.2 mM). The remaining stock solution (0.600 mL) was used as the starting volume in the NMR tube.

**Table S13.** Representative titration data for H<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup> with 1.

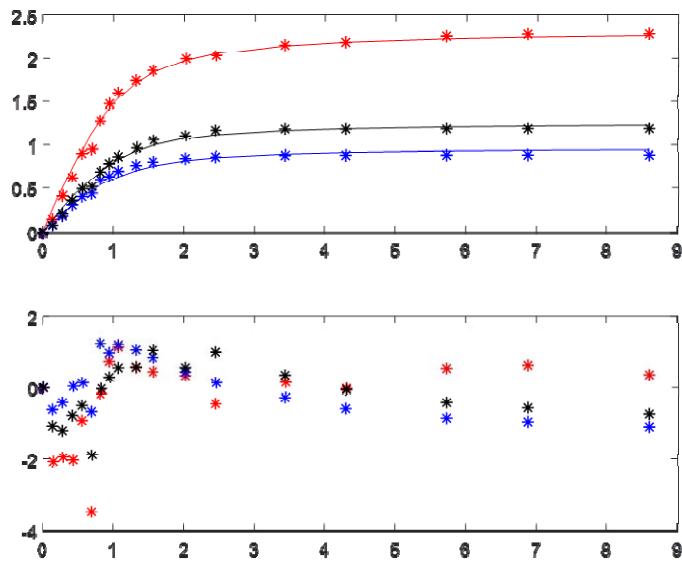
	Guest (μL)	[1] (M)	[H <sub>2</sub> PO <sub>4</sub> <sup>-</sup> ] (M)	Equiv.	H <sup>c</sup> δ (ppm)	H <sup>d</sup> δ (ppm)	H <sup>a</sup> δ (ppm)	H <sup>b</sup> δ (ppm)
1	0	9.68E-04	0.00E+00	0.00	8.635	8.592	8.024	7.714
2	5	9.68E-04	1.34E-04	0.14	8.829	8.575	8.125	7.819
3	10	9.68E-04	2.65E-04	0.27	9.140	8.551	8.274	7.993
4	15	9.68E-04	3.94E-04	0.41	9.444	8.529	8.409	8.152
5	20	9.68E-04	5.21E-04	0.54	9.705	8.510	8.484	8.307
6	25	9.68E-04	6.47E-04	0.67	9.927	8.496	8.626	8.419
7	30	9.68E-04	7.70E-04	0.80	10.099	8.483	8.693	8.517
8	35	9.68E-04	8.91E-04	0.92	10.215	8.472	8.733	8.581
9	40	9.68E-04	1.01E-03	1.04	10.317	8.464	8.773	8.642
10	50	9.68E-04	1.24E-03	1.28	10.455	8.453	8.824	8.708
11	60	9.68E-04	1.47E-03	1.52	10.558	8.446	8.851	8.774
12	80	9.68E-04	1.90E-03	1.97	10.639	8.436	8.877	8.811
13	100	9.68E-04	2.31E-03	2.39	10.688	8.430	8.890	8.838
14	150	9.68E-04	3.23E-03	3.34	10.801	8.442	8.902	8.902
15	200	9.68E-04	4.04E-03	4.18	10.847	8.418	8.905	8.905
16	300	9.68E-04	5.39E-03	5.57	10.831	8.415	8.904	8.904
17	400	9.68E-04	6.47E-03	6.68	10.852	8.412	8.904	8.904
18	600	9.68E-04	8.08E-03	8.35	10.925	8.411	8.906	8.906



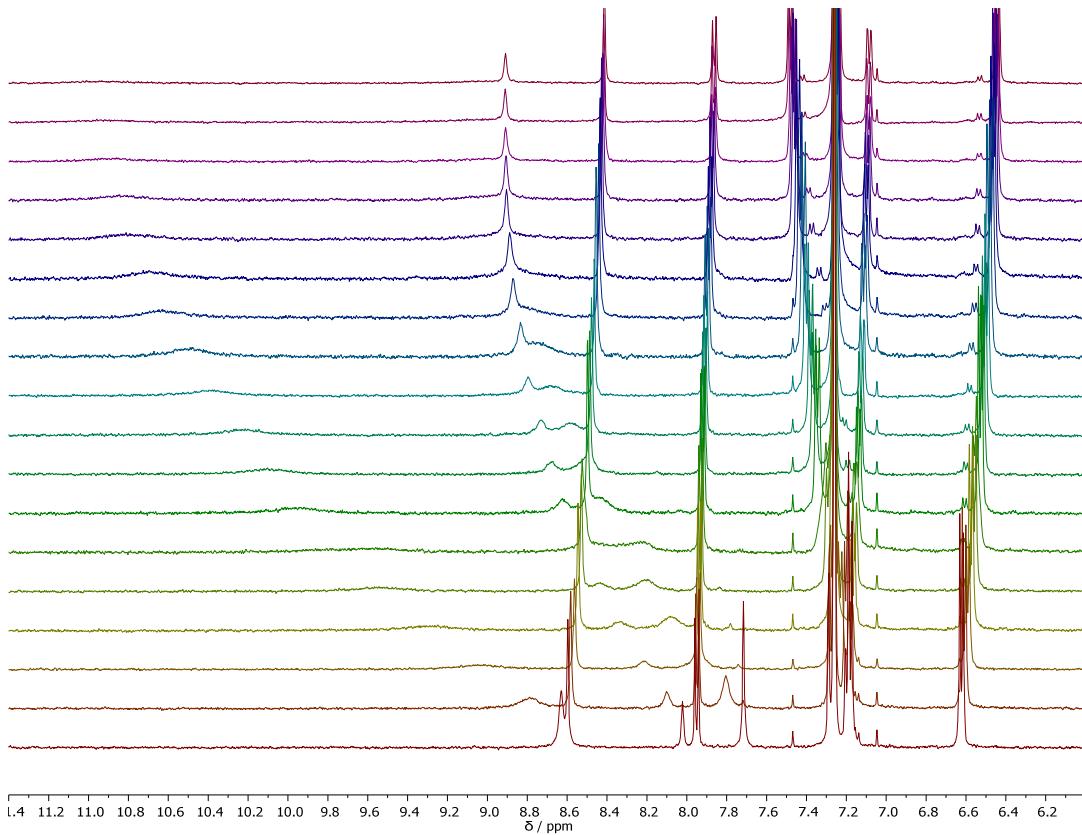
**Figure S26.** Binding isotherm for  $\text{H}_2\text{PO}_4^-$  titration with **1** in 10% *d*<sub>6</sub>-DMSO/CDCl<sub>3</sub> by <sup>1</sup>H NMR.



**Figure S27.** MatLab fit to a 2:1 model of the binding isotherm for  $\text{H}_2\text{PO}_4^-$  titration with **1**.



**Figure S28.** MatLab fit to a 1:1 model of the binding isotherm for  $\text{H}_2\text{PO}_4^-$  titration with **1**. Improper fitting model due to lack of randomness of residuals.

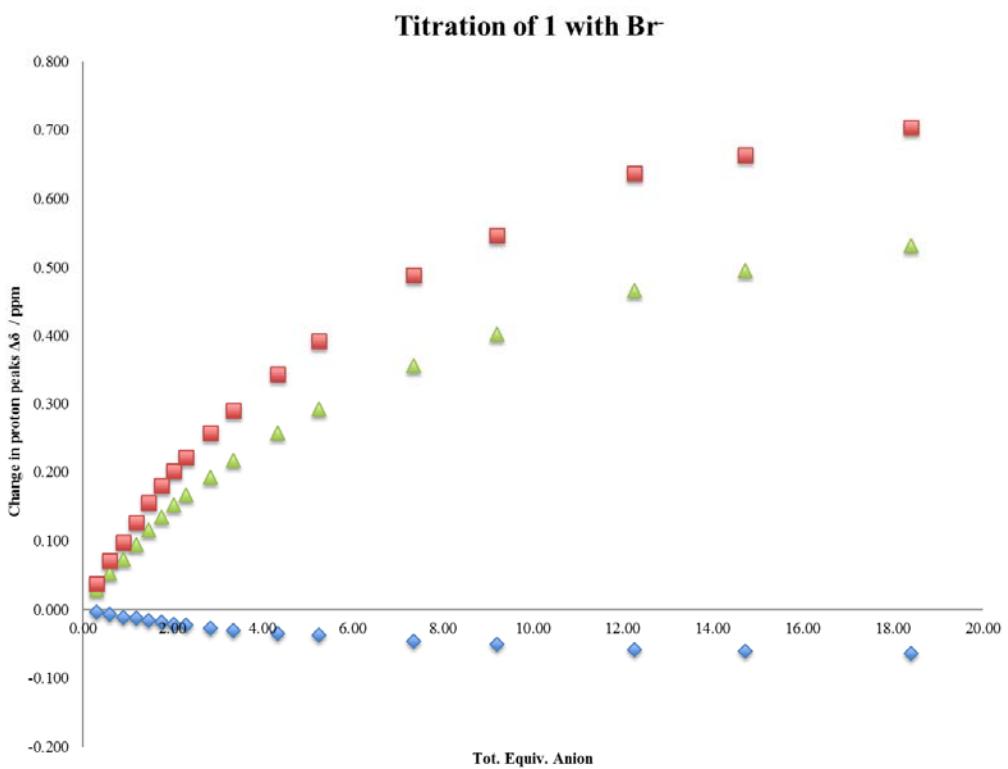


**Figure S29.**  $^1\text{H}$  NMR spectra of  $\text{H}_2\text{PO}_4^-$  titration with **1**.

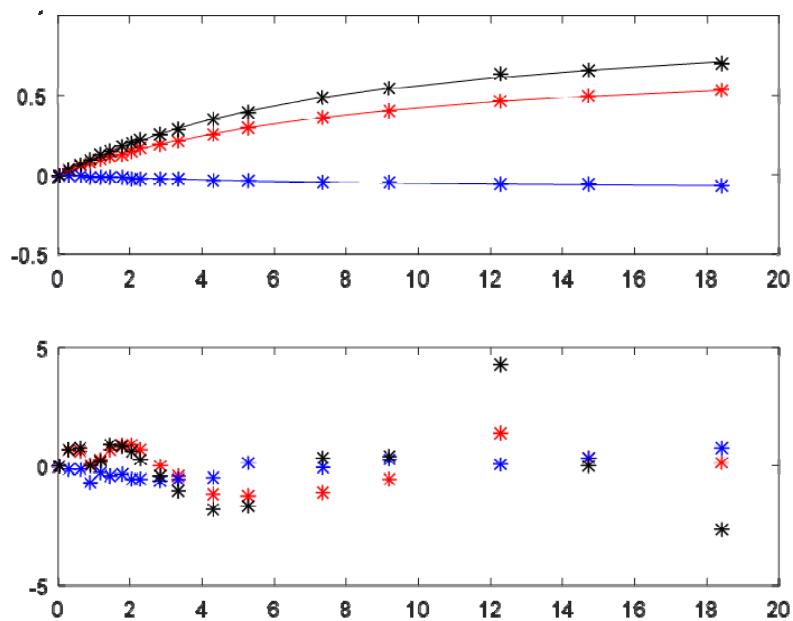
**Tetrabutylammonium bromide with 1.** A stock solution of **1** (2.19 mg, [R] = 1.01 mM) in 10% *d*<sub>6</sub>-DMSO/CDCl<sub>3</sub> (3.00 mL) was prepared. This solution (2.34 mL) was used in the dilution of TBABr guest solution (28.1 mg, [G] = 37.3 mM). The remaining stock solution (0.600 mL) was used as the starting volume in the NMR tube.

**Table S14.** Representative titration data for Br<sup>-</sup> with **1**.

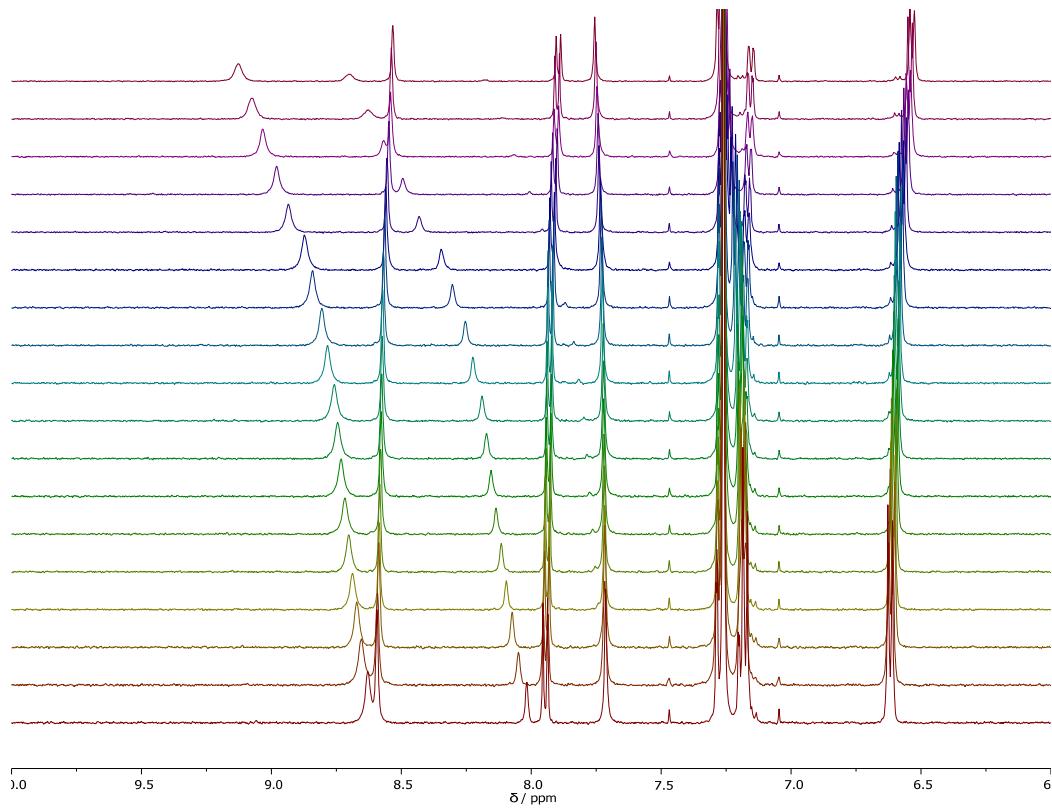
	Guest (μL)	[1] (M)	[Br <sup>-</sup> ] (M)	Equiv.	H <sup>c</sup> δ (ppm)	H <sup>d</sup> δ (ppm)	H <sup>b</sup> δ (ppm)	H <sup>a</sup> δ (ppm)
1	0	1.01E-03	0.00E+00	0.00	8.628	8.596	8.018	7.714
2	5	1.01E-03	3.08E-04	0.30	8.657	8.592	8.056	7.717
3	10	1.01E-03	6.12E-04	0.60	8.681	8.589	8.089	7.717
4	15	1.01E-03	9.10E-04	0.90	8.701	8.584	8.116	7.718
5	20	1.01E-03	1.20E-03	1.19	8.723	8.583	8.145	7.719
6	25	1.01E-03	1.49E-03	1.47	8.744	8.580	8.174	7.720
7	30	1.01E-03	1.78E-03	1.75	8.763	8.578	8.198	7.721
8	35	1.01E-03	2.06E-03	2.03	8.780	8.575	8.220	7.722
9	40	1.01E-03	2.33E-03	2.30	8.795	8.573	8.240	7.223
10	50	1.01E-03	2.87E-03	2.83	8.821	8.569	8.276	7.726
11	60	1.01E-03	3.39E-03	3.34	8.845	8.566	8.308	7.728
12	80	1.01E-03	4.39E-03	4.33	8.885	8.561	8.363	7.731
13	100	1.01E-03	5.33E-03	5.26	8.920	8.559	8.411	7.733
14	150	1.01E-03	7.46E-03	7.36	8.985	8.550	8.506	7.739
15	200	1.01E-03	9.33E-03	9.20	9.031	8.546	8.565	7.743
16	300	1.01E-03	1.24E-02	12.26	9.094	8.538	8.655	7.747
17	400	1.01E-03	1.49E-02	14.71	9.123	8.535	8.682	7.751
18	600	1.01E-03	1.87E-02	18.39	9.160	8.532	8.722	7.756



**Figure S30.** Binding isotherm for Br<sup>-</sup> titration with **1** in 10% *d*<sub>6</sub>-DMSO/CDCl<sub>3</sub> by <sup>1</sup>H NMR.



**Figure S31.** MatLab fit of binding isotherm for Br<sup>-</sup> titration with **1**.

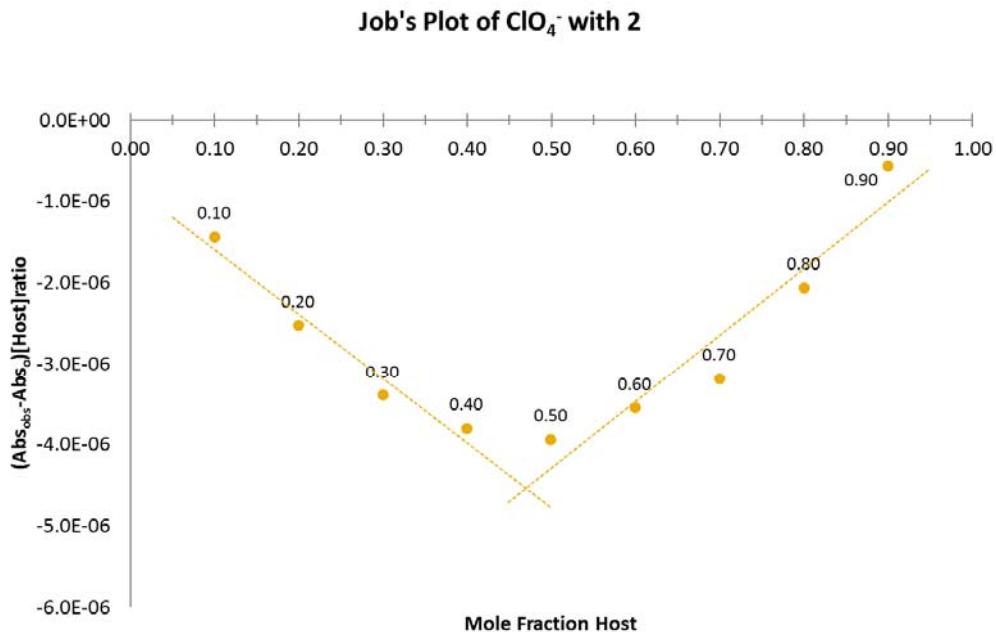


**Figure S32.** <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectra of Br<sup>-</sup> titration with **1**.

## Job's Plot Analysis



**Figure S33.** Binding isotherm for  $\text{H}_2\text{PO}_4^-$  titration with **2** in 10% DMSO/CHCl<sub>3</sub> by UV-Vis.

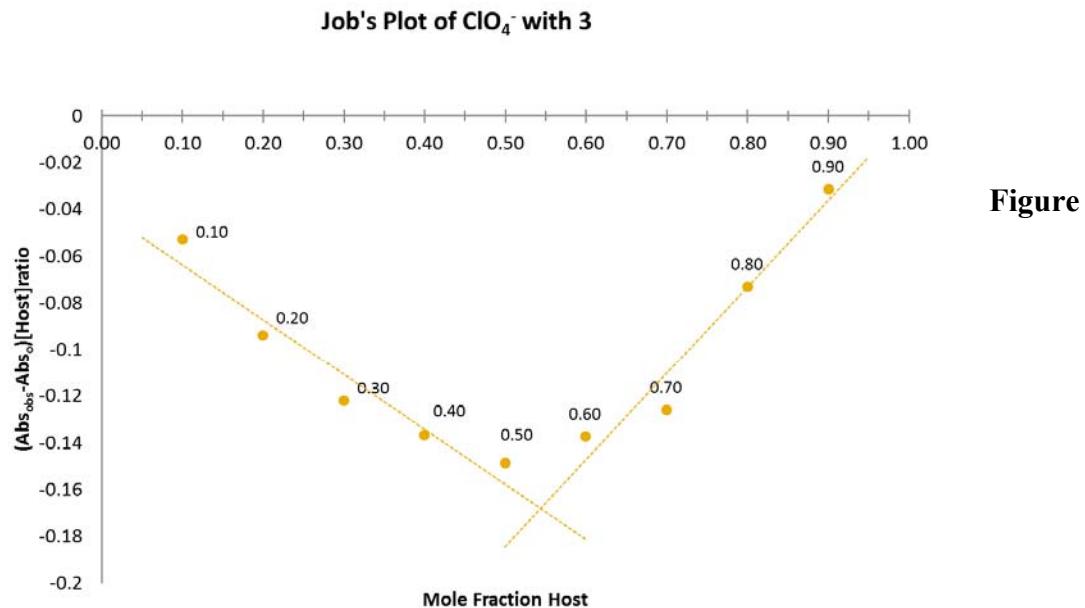


**Figure S34.** Binding isotherm for  $\text{ClO}_4^-$  titration with **2** in 10% DMSO/CHCl<sub>3</sub> by UV-Vis.



**Figure S35.** Binding isotherm for  $\text{H}_2\text{PO}_4^-$  titration with **3** in 10% DMSO/CHCl<sub>3</sub> by UV-Vis.

S36.



Binding isotherm for  $\text{ClO}_4^-$  titration with **3** in 10% DMSO/CHCl<sub>3</sub> by UV-Vis.

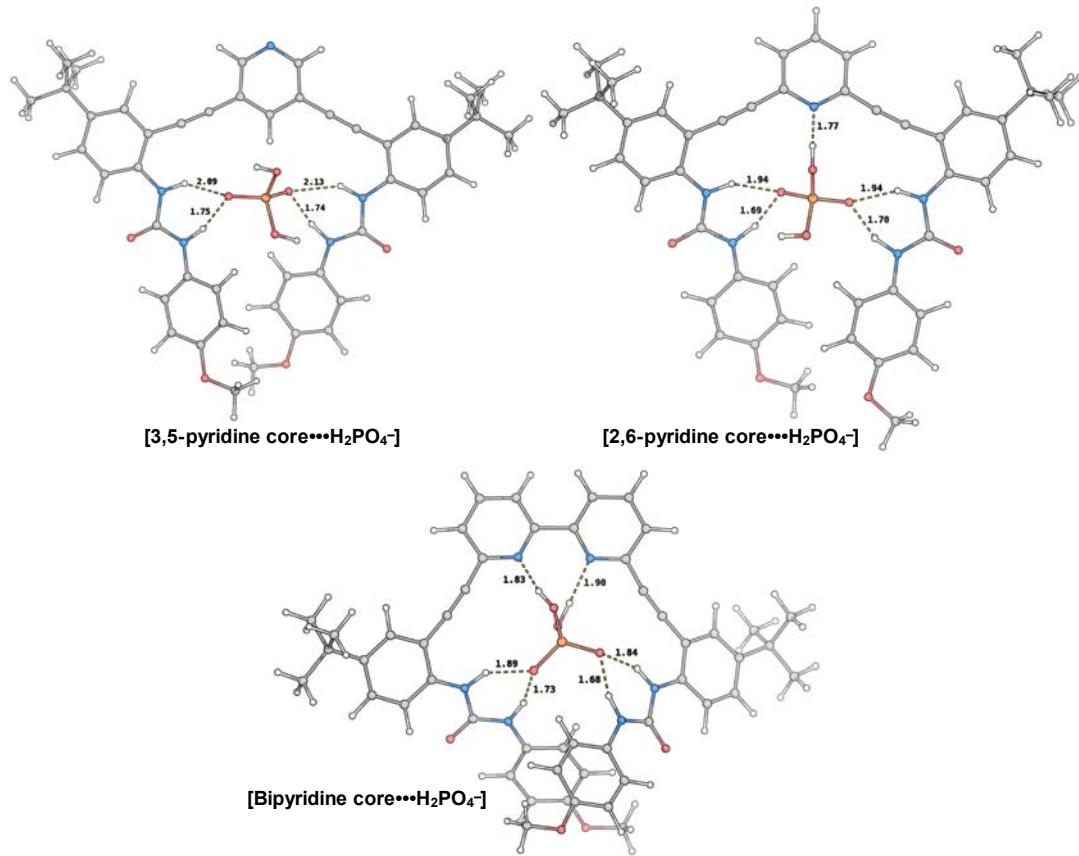
## **Complete Authorship of Gaussian 09**

Gaussian 09, Revision **D.01**, M. J. Frisch, G. W. Trucks, H. B. Schlegel, G. E. Scuseria, M. A. Robb, J. R. Cheeseman, G. Scalmani, V. Barone, G. A. Petersson, H. Nakatsuji, X. Li, M. Caricato, A. Marenich, J. Bloino, B. G. Janesko, R. Gomperts, B. Mennucci, H. P. Hratchian, J. V. Ortiz, A. F. Izmaylov, J. L. Sonnenberg, D. Williams-Young, F. Ding, F. Lipparini, F. Egidi, J. Goings, B. Peng, A. Petrone, T. Henderson, D. Ranasinghe, V. G. Zakrzewski, J. Gao, N. Rega, G. Zheng, W. Liang, M. Hada, M. Ehara, K. Toyota, R. Fukuda, J. Hasegawa, M. Ishida, T. Nakajima, Y. Honda, O. Kitao, H. Nakai, T. Vreven, K. Throssell, J. A. Montgomery, Jr., J. E. Peralta, F. Ogliaro, M. Bearpark, J. J. Heyd, E. Brothers, K. N. Kudin, V. N. Staroverov, T. Keith, R. Kobayashi, J. Normand, K. Raghavachari, A. Rendell, J. C. Burant, S. S. Iyengar, J. Tomasi, M. Cossi, J. M. Millam, M. Klene, C. Adamo, R. Cammi, J. W. Ochterski, R. L. Martin, K. Morokuma, O. Farkas, J. B. Foresman, and D. J. Fox, Gaussian, Inc., Wallingford CT, 2016.<sup>5</sup>

## **General Computational Procedure**

Manual, exhaustive conformation searches were performed to locate all relevant structures. All conformers were optimized using the Gaussian 09 computational package (see above reference) using PBE<sup>5</sup> with the 6-31G(d)<sup>6</sup> basis set for all atoms. Minima were confirmed with vibrational frequency computations, with all structures having zero imaginary vibrational frequencies. Frequencies were computed at 1 atm and 298.15 K (25 °C) in order to match experimental reaction conditions as close as possible. All images were generated with PyMOL<sup>7</sup> with distances in Ångströms (Å).

## Computed Geometries



**Figure S37.** Optimized hosts with H<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup>.

### [3,5-pyridine core...H<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup>]

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Using Gaussian 09: AM64L-G09RevD.01 24-Apr-2013

---

```
# pbepbe/6-31G*/auto gfoutput scf=(direct,tight,maxcycle=300,xqc)
opt=(maxcycle=250) freq=noraman iop(1/8=18) Temperature=298.15
#N Geom=AllCheck Guess=TCheck SCRF=Check Test GenChk RPBE/PBEPBE/6-31G(d)/Auto
Freq
```

---

Pointgroup= C1 Stoichiometry= C45H47N5O8P(1-) C1[X(C45H47N5O8P)] #Atoms= 106  
 Charge = -1 Multiplicity = 1

---

SCF Energy= -2956.88311529 Predicted Change= -4.813685D-08

---

Optimization completed. {Found 1 times}  
 Item Max Val. Criteria Pass? RMS Val. Criteria Pass?  
 Force 0.00001 || 0.00045 [ YES ] 0.00000 || 0.00030 [ YES ]  
 Displ 0.00349 || 0.00180 [ NO ] 0.00349 || 0.00180 [ YES ]

---

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C	0.679849	-5.508856	-0.162129
H	1.583435	-6.130829	-0.122005
C	0.811234	-4.093871	-0.218566
C	2.101653	-3.501664	-0.195091
C	3.247164	-3.052594	-0.149496
C	4.613580	-2.665090	-0.137395
C	-0.372017	-3.328524	-0.276966
H	-0.345049	-2.236162	-0.342888
C	-1.617575	-3.992137	-0.240195
C	-2.840331	-3.271509	-0.233372
C	-3.911540	-2.667467	-0.191991
C	-5.161960	-1.999071	-0.133954
C	5.581468	-3.676327	-0.353223
H	5.200721	-4.692832	-0.501453
C	6.959311	-3.421847	-0.393729
C	7.954187	-4.572629	-0.644049
C	7.795025	-5.646808	0.460433
H	6.770240	-6.054429	0.487184
H	8.012555	-5.221717	1.455813
H	8.489873	-6.489346	0.284975
C	9.418936	-4.089212	-0.635589
H	10.094067	-4.944633	-0.816442
H	9.696482	-3.642240	0.335231
H	9.607640	-3.340722	-1.425101
C	7.665382	-5.214344	-2.023913
H	7.791326	-4.475576	-2.834496
H	6.634580	-5.602855	-2.082765
H	8.356952	-6.056615	-2.212813
C	7.350908	-2.081027	-0.203003
H	8.411377	-1.811036	-0.222155
C	6.430314	-1.054093	0.021939
H	6.767281	-0.027212	0.157155
C	5.040889	-1.310476	0.067438
N	4.089439	-0.325649	0.323405
H	3.122021	-0.635460	0.503318
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C	3.077214	3.162124	0.853741
C	-5.256548	-0.567917	-0.193065
N	-4.081113	0.177091	-0.286527
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H	-8.655690	-0.288509	0.002876
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C	-8.866921	-3.102935	0.172165

C	-8.766520	-3.930796	1.477611
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H	-7.862705	-4.563227	1.489323
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H	-9.031461	-3.505175	-1.983170
H	-9.819828	-4.735032	-0.948145
H	-8.042243	-4.701692	-1.108452
C	-10.175057	-2.287059	0.219546
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H	-10.321823	-1.695071	-0.700922
H	-10.193818	-1.594967	1.079716
C	-6.341758	-2.770583	-0.017648
H	-6.213701	-3.857568	0.027232
O	-4.966428	2.306249	-0.675603
O	5.417098	1.578982	0.053375
C	4.066887	4.089733	0.446980
H	5.013085	3.715907	0.055615
C	3.824478	5.461775	0.546657
H	4.585194	6.182134	0.227374
C	2.604204	5.950412	1.048324
O	2.464983	7.328458	1.069793
C	1.206608	7.834239	1.501135
H	0.380591	7.501192	0.842324
H	1.290484	8.931187	1.450547
H	0.977629	7.537048	2.543995
C	1.624559	5.035873	1.469671
H	0.659049	5.373703	1.854023
C	1.863215	3.659203	1.373345
H	1.081142	2.959259	1.689764
C	-0.814493	3.376467	-1.223864
H	-0.173225	2.490023	-1.168022
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H	0.835345	4.666618	-1.712263
C	-1.052527	5.760244	-1.609754
O	-0.598061	7.033082	-1.899730
C	0.765705	7.151049	-2.298795
H	0.904602	8.207225	-2.578000
H	0.989311	6.509375	-3.173607
H	1.464601	6.899345	-1.478794
C	-2.431247	5.641297	-1.354290
H	-3.052950	6.540768	-1.413887
C	-3.002680	4.409057	-1.029067
H	-4.072072	4.321373	-0.836066
P	-0.258074	-0.029645	1.314522
O	1.263926	-0.124987	1.315416
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---

Statistical Thermodynamic Analysis  
 Temperature= 298.150 Kelvin      Pressure= 1.00000 Atm

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SCF Energy= -2956.88311529   Predicted Change= -4.813685D-08

Zero-point correction (ZPE)=	-2956.0544	0.82871
Internal Energy (U)=	-2955.9943	0.88874
Enthalpy (H)=	-2955.9934	0.88969
Gibbs Free Energy (G)=	-2956.1557	0.72740

---

Frequencies -- 7.1336 11.5027 14.1963

### [2,6-pyridine core•••H<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup>]

---

Using Gaussian 09: AM64L-G09RevD.01 24-Apr-2013

---

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# pbepbe/6-31G*/auto gfsprint gfinput scf=(direct,tight,maxcycle=300,xqc)
opt=(maxcycle=250) freq=noraman iop(1/8=18) Temperature=298.15
#N Geom=AllCheck Guess=TCheck SCRF=Check Test GenChk RPBE/PBE/6-31G(d)/Auto
Freq
```

---

Pointgroup= C1 Stoichiometry= C45H47N5O8P(1-) C1[X(C45H47N5O8P)] #Atoms= 106  
Charge = -1 Multiplicity = 1

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SCF Energy= -2956.88200469 Predicted Change= -1.501878D-08

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Optimization completed.		{Found	1	times}		
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Displ	0.00273    0.00180	[ NO ]		0.00273    0.00180	[ YES ]	

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Atomic Type	Coordinates (Angstroms)		
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H	-0.594661	-6.740166	2.546644
C	0.703869	-5.270018	1.629304
H	1.640987	-5.752606	1.919850
C	0.743454	-4.059550	0.889069
C	1.998544	-3.488488	0.543268
C	3.136160	-3.066443	0.331432
C	4.495849	-2.742613	0.096918
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C	-3.816686	-2.629002	0.237634
C	-5.064612	-2.029358	-0.071292
C	5.421488	-3.820124	0.178750
H	5.000580	-4.800216	0.419251
C	6.790618	-3.665538	-0.041789
C	7.796606	-4.829113	0.027879
C	7.124415	-6.164187	0.406469
H	6.361942	-6.462160	-0.334427
H	6.638986	-6.109919	1.396775
H	7.882861	-6.966264	0.447211
C	8.879501	-4.516326	1.090760
H	9.622551	-5.334189	1.137487
H	8.426641	-4.403335	2.091147

H	9.420686	-3.582712	0.860761
C	8.475211	-5.003331	-1.353833
H	8.990204	-4.081055	-1.672483
H	7.729028	-5.254735	-2.127554
H	9.225135	-5.815698	-1.318944
C	7.225191	-2.354642	-0.352550
H	8.289367	-2.167254	-0.541565
C	6.358115	-1.269474	-0.432305
H	6.728857	-0.272188	-0.665604
C	4.963600	-1.419361	-0.206873
N	4.068753	-0.363154	-0.270241
H	3.061308	-0.556751	-0.100005
C	4.397587	0.995745	-0.502079
N	3.269302	1.782244	-0.534303
H	2.357316	1.294163	-0.354147
C	3.219410	3.175123	-0.703523
C	-5.257971	-0.604744	-0.088128
N	-4.188512	0.233806	0.193531
H	-3.246568	-0.191174	0.313249
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N	-3.012067	2.154747	0.669259
H	-2.221204	1.463900	0.712552
C	-2.681382	3.502021	0.894448
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H	-6.722384	0.939852	-0.406912
C	-7.601169	-1.021928	-0.677331
H	-8.577941	-0.587674	-0.912860
C	-7.436252	-2.423261	-0.666980
C	-8.572508	-3.416539	-0.981497
C	-9.904365	-2.699602	-1.283189
H	-9.820141	-2.034834	-2.160654
H	-10.246774	-2.094852	-0.425151
H	-10.688426	-3.446091	-1.502511
C	-8.794159	-4.355927	0.229917
H	-9.083750	-3.780174	1.126208
H	-7.880961	-4.923746	0.477288
H	-9.596865	-5.085300	0.012929
C	-8.189849	-4.264784	-2.219777
H	-7.251803	-4.821915	-2.055875
H	-8.047049	-3.622618	-3.106262
H	-8.984755	-4.999126	-2.448776
C	-6.152898	-2.890398	-0.354789
H	-5.945787	-3.965938	-0.326458
O	-5.302351	2.296041	0.284955
O	5.557724	1.410077	-0.659764
C	4.339988	4.029221	-0.647809
H	5.329381	3.594271	-0.503972
C	4.184095	5.419488	-0.775654
H	5.075120	6.051434	-0.718556
C	2.909897	5.978352	-0.962241
O	2.642118	7.335197	-1.072028
C	3.754795	8.210062	-0.985519
H	4.490267	8.025772	-1.794668
H	4.276189	8.123401	-0.010529
H	3.350270	9.229020	-1.090597
C	1.791594	5.128164	-1.045727

H	0.801013	5.563961	-1.208143
C	1.942135	3.748995	-0.918650
H	1.066019	3.095753	-1.001693
C	-3.608752	4.571234	0.881263
H	-4.660956	4.355477	0.694114
C	-3.172046	5.880130	1.097750
H	-3.885573	6.710788	1.083156
C	-1.814437	6.166501	1.331828
O	-1.499495	7.497845	1.523111
C	-0.123557	7.809797	1.709307
H	0.294678	7.309477	2.605661
H	-0.081835	8.900824	1.855201
H	0.492165	7.537117	0.829623
C	-0.888465	5.108767	1.356664
H	0.176813	5.287094	1.520752
C	-1.323214	3.795170	1.139950
H	-0.590837	2.980450	1.154389
P	-0.134276	-0.034376	-0.390360
O	-1.337900	0.024849	0.568570
O	-0.273110	1.175560	-1.523338
H	-1.211914	1.235258	-1.795239
O	-0.252913	-1.350661	-1.342679
H	-0.323174	-2.142592	-0.719852
O	1.266350	0.120867	0.207207

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#### Statistical Thermodynamic Analysis

Temperature= 298.150 Kelvin      Pressure= 1.00000 Atm

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SCF Energy=	-2956.88200469	Predicted Change=	-1.501878D-08
Zero-point correction (ZPE)=	-2956.0539	0.82808	
Internal Energy (U)=	-2955.9944	0.88754	
Enthalpy (H)=	-2955.9935	0.88849	
Gibbs Free Energy (G)=	-2956.1544	0.72752	

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Frequencies --    6.4289                9.4121                15.7228

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#### [Bipyridine core•••H<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup>]

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Using Gaussian 09: AM64L-G09RevD.01 24-Apr-2013

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```
# pbepbe/6-31G*/auto gfsprint gfinput scf=(direct,tight,maxcycle=300,xqc)
opt=(maxcycle=250) freq=noraman iop(1/8=18) Temperature=298.15
#N Geom=AllCheck Guess=TCheck SCRF=Check Test GenChk RPBEPBE/6-31G(d)/Auto
Freq
```

---

Pointgroup= C1 Stoichiometry= C50H50N6O8P(1-) C1[X(C50H50N6O8P)] #Atoms= 115
Charge = -1      Multiplicity = 1

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SCF Energy= -3203.67970897      Predicted Change= -7.545578D-09

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Optimization completed.	{Found	1	times}			
Item	Max Val.	Criteria	Pass?	RMS Val.	Criteria	Pass?
Force	0.00001	0.00045	[ YES ]	0.00000	0.00030	[ YES ]
Displ	0.00372	0.00180	[ NO ]	0.00372	0.00180	[ YES ]

---

Atomic Type	Coordinates (Angstroms)		
	X	Y	Z
C	-3.700700	-5.349797	0.721841
H	-4.744192	-5.268573	1.038436
C	-2.997836	-6.548607	0.813905
H	-3.484075	-7.445823	1.212061
C	-1.654051	-6.588267	0.417491
H	-1.064554	-7.503406	0.523296
C	-1.061885	-5.413176	-0.087699
N	-1.736095	-4.249319	-0.186800
C	-3.031037	-4.197984	0.229646
C	-3.717651	-2.955350	0.178060
C	-4.404765	-1.936164	0.266766
C	-5.282912	-0.833413	0.408433
C	-4.830782	0.472192	0.806147
N	-3.477458	0.731139	0.915845
H	-2.808921	0.162735	0.352972
C	-2.908785	1.799257	1.654076
N	-1.553766	1.871297	1.438580
H	-1.175895	1.219549	0.710620
C	-0.653614	2.811957	1.965552
C	-5.826691	1.446887	1.060457
H	-5.503342	2.430601	1.400576
C	-7.181334	1.163471	0.888355
H	-7.894560	1.969732	1.086884
C	-7.647279	-0.100299	0.459206
C	-9.138316	-0.425342	0.238890
C	-10.049437	0.776233	0.562876
H	-9.823051	1.645217	-0.079457
H	-9.949840	1.092320	1.616115
H	-11.105475	0.500197	0.393525
C	-9.556587	-1.605930	1.150263
H	-8.958352	-2.510267	0.945558
H	-10.620661	-1.861962	0.990081
H	-9.420030	-1.347875	2.214914
C	-9.366981	-0.819114	-1.241691
H	-10.429819	-1.069997	-1.418461
H	-8.760436	-1.695402	-1.527275
H	-9.091861	0.011262	-1.914963
C	-6.669849	-1.077150	0.237830
H	-6.956464	-2.087641	-0.074091
O	-3.569000	2.539036	2.401097
C	-0.975466	3.768789	2.956064
H	-1.990217	3.799154	3.354530
C	-0.001923	4.668860	3.397221
H	-0.244089	5.416112	4.160443
C	1.302170	4.648012	2.868970
O	2.175502	5.597154	3.369471
C	3.482104	5.604935	2.810494
H	3.463812	5.784423	1.717515
H	4.018330	4.653415	2.999113
H	4.019084	6.428495	3.307438
C	1.632352	3.694943	1.889922
H	2.624266	3.654027	1.431796
C	0.660120	2.787509	1.456027

H	0.922488	2.053276	0.688397
C	0.903378	-6.576879	-1.141413
H	0.266104	-7.443678	-1.338514
C	0.366568	-5.423250	-0.535986
N	1.097563	-4.309113	-0.317113
C	2.406357	-4.302206	-0.692249
C	3.018859	-5.435897	-1.290136
H	4.073484	-5.384792	-1.574269
C	2.252453	-6.575436	-1.518744
H	2.694954	-7.454041	-2.000449
C	3.190638	-3.138971	-0.460317
C	4.000623	-2.219487	-0.334500
C	5.006897	-1.239385	-0.137489
C	6.273448	-1.702637	0.299292
H	6.371425	-2.782623	0.456737
C	7.358914	-0.851689	0.539866
C	8.705954	-1.424853	1.024018
C	9.237894	-2.446983	-0.011203
H	9.410652	-1.962937	-0.988301
H	8.524687	-3.273861	-0.168927
H	10.193788	-2.885801	0.331348
C	8.506543	-2.135657	2.385764
H	7.765481	-2.949677	2.313265
H	8.147731	-1.424383	3.149858
H	9.458790	-2.573144	2.740161
C	9.774186	-0.327191	1.206841
H	9.469730	0.416988	1.963406
H	9.977869	0.206005	0.261697
H	10.721321	-0.782579	1.547293
C	7.129961	0.523643	0.317177
H	7.934616	1.245940	0.487252
C	5.903176	1.023151	-0.120801
H	5.759650	2.090489	-0.286955
C	4.802225	0.165885	-0.371142
N	3.579330	0.609072	-0.839988
H	2.819197	-0.090621	-0.993566
C	3.245460	1.940776	-1.188677
N	1.990281	1.998329	-1.747846
H	1.460963	1.087334	-1.777869
C	1.297880	3.152486	-2.155160
O	3.996317	2.915818	-1.005689
C	-0.099233	3.041635	-2.315575
H	-0.597248	2.097467	-2.060699
C	-0.861211	4.132184	-2.753201
H	-1.942752	4.009012	-2.853681
C	-0.236294	5.359989	-3.032184
O	-0.890612	6.500474	-3.464776
C	-2.302806	6.415623	-3.576183
H	-2.615958	5.662387	-4.327477
H	-2.642357	7.411764	-3.901425
H	-2.779472	6.165682	-2.607481
C	1.155615	5.476332	-2.866779
H	1.628743	6.440250	-3.081757
C	1.920477	4.390611	-2.435994
H	2.997875	4.487514	-2.296794
P	-0.170249	-0.988826	-0.911894

O	1.138982	-0.551726	-1.590245
O	0.099375	-1.738210	0.522391
H	0.498858	-2.636016	0.347560
O	-0.802265	-2.168706	-1.854658
H	-1.224280	-2.853254	-1.261102
O	-1.198578	0.122918	-0.632044

---

## Statistical Thermodynamic Analysis

Temperature= 298.150 Kelvin Pressure= 1.00000 Atm

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SCF Energy= -3203.67970897 Predicted Change= -7.545578D-09

Zero-point correction (ZPE)= -3202.7835 0.89616

Internal Energy (U)= -3202.7200 0.95961

Enthalpy (H)= -3202.7191 0.96055

Gibbs Free Energy (G)= -3202.8889 0.79077

---

Frequencies -- 4.7093 10.1799 13.3351

## References

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## NMR Spectra

