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A New Saponin from *Ilex argentina*

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SUMMARY. ***Ilex argentina*** **Lillo is one of the species reported as adulterant or substitute of the genuine mate (*Ilex paraguariensis* St. Hil.). The main saponin found in the leaves was isolated and its structure elucidated through spectroscopic methods as the 28-β-D-glucopyranosylester of 3-O-α-L-arabinopyranosyl-20(S)- 19α, 24-dihydroxy-ursolic acid.**

RESUMEN. "Una nueva saponina de *Ilex argentina* ". *Ilex argentina* Lillo es una de las especies que ha sido mencionada como substituto de la yerba mate verdadera *(Ilex paraguariensis* St. Hil.). La principal saponina de las hojas fue aislada y su estructura química elucidada a través de métodos espectroscópicos como el éster 28-β-D-glucopiranósido del ácido 3-O-α-L-arabinopiranosil-20(S)- 19α, 24-dihidroxiursólico.

INTRODUCTION

Several *Ilex* species have been reported as adulterant and/or substitutes of the genuine mate product [1]. One of them is *Ilex argentina* Lillo ("roble" or "palo de yerba"), an allopatric species from the subtropical subandean rainforest of Northwestern Argentina and Eastern Bolivia, geographically isolated and very distant from *I. paraguariensis* main distribution area. Because of this, *I. argentina* deserves a special attention. Continuing our work on the saponin content of *Ilex* species [2] we report herein our first results concerning the isolation and structural elucidation of the main saponin, named ILA-1 (1) obtained from the leaves of *Ilex argentina*.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Plant material

Leaves of *Ilex argentina* Lillo were collected in Yerba Buena, Province of Tucumán, Argentina, in october 1992. A herbarium specimen (leg. Giberti 383) is deposited in BACP (Herbarium Cefaprin, Buenos Aires, Argentina).

KEY WORDS: *Aquifoliaceae; Ilex argentina;* Saponins.
PALABRAS CLAVE: Aquifoliaceae; Ilex argentina; Saponinas.

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