Supporting Information

Cerberus-type N-Heterocyclic Carbenes: Synthesis and Study of the First Tritopic

Carbenes with D_{3h}–Symmetry

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General Considerations. Unless otherwise noted, all reactions were performed under an atmosphere of nitrogen using standard Schlenk techniques or inside of a nitrogen-filled drybox. Toluene and tetrahydrofuran (THF) were distilled from calcium hydride or sodium and benzophenone under a nitrogen atmosphere prior to use. ¹H NMR spectra were recorded using a Varian Gemini spectrometer. Chemical shifts are reported in delta (δ) units and expressed in parts per million (ppm) downfield from tetramethylsilane using the residual protio solvent as an internal standard (CDCl₃, 7.24 ppm; C₆D₆, 7.15 ppm; DMSO-*d*₆, 2.49 ppm). ¹³C NMR spectra were recorded using a Varian Gemini spectrometer. Chemical shifts are reported in delta (δ) units and expressed in parts per million (ppm) downfield from tetramethylsilane using the residual protio solvent as an internal standard (CDCl₃, 7.24 ppm; C₆D₆, 7.15 ppm; DMSO-*d*₆, 2.49 ppm). ¹³C NMR spectra were recorded using a Varian Gemini spectrometer. Chemical shifts are reported in delta (δ) units and expressed in parts per million (ppm) downfield from tetramethylsilane using the solvent as an internal standard (CDCl₃, 77.0 ppm; C₆D₆, 128.0 ppm; DMSO-*d*₆, 39.5 ppm). ¹³C NMR spectra were routinely run with broadband decoupling. IR spectra were recorded using Perkin-Elmer Spectrum BX FT-IR system. High-resolution mass spectra (HRMS) were obtained with a VG analytical ZAB2-E or a Karatos MS9 instrument and are reported as m/z (relative intensity). Melting points were obtained with a Mel-Temp apparatus and are uncorrected.

9,10-Dibutyl-2,3,6,7,12,13-hexakis-N-*tert*-butylaminotriptycene 3a. А coupling catalyst was prepared by charging a 20 mL vial with 1,3-bis(2,6-diisopropylphenyl) imidazolium chloride (42 mg, 0.10 mmol), NaOtBu (15 mg, 0.15 mmol), Pd(OAc)2 (13 mg, 0.05 mmol), toluene (5 mL), and a magnetic stir bar. After stirring this mixture at ambient temperature for 10 min, the catalyst solution was added to a 30 mL vial with a Teflon-lined cap containing 2,3,6,7,12,13-hexabromo-9,10-dibutyltriptycene¹ (0.560 g, 0.667 mmol) suspended in toluene (20 mL). Afterward, tert-butyl amine (0.300 g, 4.00 mmol) and NaOtBu (0.384 g, 4.00 mmol) were added and the resulting mixture was sealed and stirred at 110 °C for 16 h. The reaction was then cooled to ambient temperature, filtered through Celite, rinsed with toluene and concentrated to dryness to afford the desired product as a dark brown powder (0.476 g, 90% yield). m.p. 315-318 °C (dec., color changed from dark brown to orange). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 6.84 (s, 6H), 3.40 (s, 6H), 2.63 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 4H), 2.13 (br p, 4H), 1.75 (sextet, J = 7.6 Hz, 4H), 1.20 (s, 54H), 1.06 (t, J = 7.2 Hz, 6H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃, 50 °C): δ 141.7, 133.9, 115.5, 51.9, 51.2, 30.2, 28.8, 28.0, 25.1, 14.2. HRMS: m/z calcd for C₅₂H₈₅N₆ [M+H⁺] 793.6824, found 793.6830.

Tris(azolium) 4a. A 50 mL round bottomed flask was charged with **3a** (0.350 g, 0.442 mmol), triethylorthoformate (20 mL), and a magnetic stir bar. Tetrafluoroboric acid etherate (0.19 mL, 1.32 mmol) was added and the resulting mixture was stirred in the open flask at 110 °C for 18 h. After cooling to ambient temperature, the mixture was poured into Et₂O (150 mL) and the precipitated solids were collected via filtration to obtain the desired product as a light tan powder (0.393 g, 96% yield). m.p. 365–372 °C (dec., color changed from light tan to dark brown). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 8.84 (s, 3H), 8.04 (br s, 6H), 3.51 (br s, 4H), 2.04 (br s, 8H), 1.79 (s, 54H), 1.06 (br s, 6H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆, 120 °C): δ 143.4, 138.8, 128.4, 110.3, 61.0, 52.5, 28.0, 27.3, 26.3, 23.7, 13.4. HRMS: *m/z* calcd for C₅₅H₈₁B₂F₈N₆ [M⁺] 999.6575, found 999.6575.

¹ C. L. Hilton, C. R. Jamison, H. K. Zane and B. T. King J. Org. Chem., 2009, 74, 405–407.

Tris(NHC) 1a. A 30 mL vial with a Teflon-lined cap was charged with **4a** (0.250 g, 0.230 mmol), NaH (0.017 g, 0.691 mmol), KOtBu (1 mg), THF (10 mL) and a magnetic stir bar. After stirring at ambient temperature for 20 h, the resulting reaction mixture was filtered through a 0.45 μ m PTFE filter into a 100 mL round bottom flask and then concentrated to dryness under reduced pressure to afford the desired product as a brown powder (0.178 g, 94% yield). m.p. 250–255 °C (dec.) ¹H NMR (400 MHz, C₆D₆): δ 7.89 (s, 6H), 3.33 (br s, 4H), 2.39 (br s, 4H), 1.89 (sextet, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 4H), 1.77 (s, 54H), 1.14 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz). ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, C₆D₆, 60 °C): δ 225.8, 164.1, 132.9, 108.2, 67.8, 57.2, 30.9, 30.2, 28.8, 25.8, 14.5. HRMS: *m/z* calcd for C₅₅H₇₉N₆ [M+H⁺] 823.63607, found 823.63582.

9,10-Dihexylanthracene. Using a modified literature procedure,¹ a 1 L round-bottom flask was charged with anthraquinone (7.5 g, 36 mmol), anisole (150 mL), and a magnetic stir bar. The reaction vessel was then sealed with a rubber septum, purged with nitrogen and cooled to 0 °C in an ice bath. Hexyllithium (180 mmol, 1.8 M in hexanes) was then added via cannula over 5 min and the resulting reaction mixture was allowed to warm to ambient temperature. After 24 h, the reaction was quenched by adding an aqueous solution saturated with ammonium chloride. The organic layer was separated, washed with water $(2 \times 200 \text{ mL})$, dried over sodium sulfate and concentrated under reduced pressure to yield a reddish-brown residue. The residue was dissolved in THF (60 mL) and added dropwise to a mixture of SnCl₂ (40.6 g, 180 mmol) in acetic acid (240 mL) while stirring at ambient temperature. The suspension was stirred for 24 h, at which time the organic material was extracted with hexanes (600 mL), rinsed with 5% aqueous ammonium hydroxide solution (500 mL), dried over sodium sulfate and concentrated to dryness. The collected solid was then dissolved in a minimum amount of hexanes, passed through a short column of silica using hexanes as the eluent, and then concentrated to dryness to afford the desired product as a fluffy, bright yellow solid (4.73 g, 38% yield). Single yellow crystals were grown by slow evaporation of a saturated CDCl₃ solution. m.p. 67–69 °C. ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 8.29 (q, J = 3.3 Hz, 4H), 7.47 (q, J = 3.5 Hz, 4H), 3.57 (t, J = 8.4 Hz, 4H), 1.80 (m, 4H), 1.59 (p, J = 7.4 Hz, 4H), 1.37 (m, 8H), 0.91 (t, J = 7.2 Hz, 6H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 133.9, 129.3, 125.2, 124.7, 31.8, 31.4, 30.1, 28.2, 22.7, 14.1. HRMS: m/z calcd for C₂₆H₃₄ [M⁺] 346.2655, found 346.2655.

9,10-Dihexyltriptycene. Using a modified literature procedure,¹ anthranillic acid (4.00 g, 28.8 mmol) was dissolved in THF (175 mL) and added dropwise over 2.5 h to a refluxing mixture of isoamyl nitrite (4.0 mL, 30 mmol) and 9,10-dihexylanthracene (4.00 g, 11.6 mmol) in CHCl₃. After refluxing the resulting mixture for an additional 15 min, the residual solvent was evaporated. The remaining residue was then dissolved in xylenes (175 mL), and maleic anhydride (1.75 g, 17.8 mmol) was added. This mixture was refluxed for 15 min at 162 °C and then allowed to cool to ambient temperature. The mixture was rinsed with water (200 mL), filtered through a short column of silica gel using xylenes as the eluent, and then concentrated under reduced pressure. After standing for 2 h, the residue solidified into a dark orange-brown material, which was rinsed with cold acetone. Subsequent removal of the residual solvent afforded the desired product as a white powder (1.44 g, 30% yield). A second crop of product crystallized via slow

evaporation of the acetone rinse (2.54 g, 53%; combined yield = 3.98 g, 83%). The second crop of product was isolated as single, colorless, rectangular crystals that were suitable for X-ray diffraction analysis. m.p. 155–157 °C. ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃, 50 °C): δ 7.36 (dd, J = 3.3, 2.8 Hz, 6H), 6.97 (dd, J = 3.3, 2.5 Hz, 6H), 2.88 (t, J = 7.8 Hz, 4H) 2.15 (m, 4H), 1.80 (p, J = 7.5 Hz, 4H), 1.43-1.56 (m, 8H), 0.99 (t, J = 7.3 Hz, 6H). ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃, 50 °C): δ 148.4, 124.4, 122.1, 53.2, 32.0, 31.6, 28.6, 25.4, 22.8, 14.1. HRMS: m/z calcd for C₃₂H₃₉ [M+H⁺] 423.3052, found 423.3054.

2,3,6,7,14,15-Hexabromo-9,10-dihexyltriptycene (2b). Using a modified literature procedure,¹ a 250 mL round-bottom flask was charged with 9,10-dihexyltriptycene (1.00 g, 2.4 mmol), iron powder (0.050 g, 0.895 mmol), CHCl₃ (stabilized with amylene, 80 mL) and a magnetic stir bar. After adding bromine (0.75 mL, 14.6 mmol) to the mixture, the flask was equipped with a water-jacketed condenser and heated at 80 °C. After 1 h, the reaction was cooled to ambient temperature. The residual solvent was evaporated under reduced pressure. The resulting solid was then redissolved in CHCl₃ (stabilized with amylene) and filtered through a short column of silica gel using CHCl₃ (stabilized with amylene) as the eluent. The residual solvent was then evaporated under reduced pressure to afford afford the crude product (2.84 g) as an orange solid. The crude material was rinsed with cold acetone and filtered to yield the desired product in pure form as a white powder (1.73 g, 82% yield). Single colorless crystals were grown from a saturated hexanes solution at 0 °C or via slow cooling of a saturated ethyl acetate solution. m.p. 292–294 °C. ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃, 50 °C): δ 7.56 (s, 6H), 2.73 (t, J = 7.8 Hz, 4H), 2.01 (m, 4H), 1.81 (p, J = 7.5 Hz, 4H), 1.47-1.59 (m, 8H), 1.02 (t, J = 7.3 Hz, 6H). ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃, 50 °C): δ 147.3, 127.9, 121.5, 52.3, 31.7, 31.2, 27.7, 24.9, 22.6, 14.0. HRMS: m/z calcd for $C_{32}H_{33}^{79}Br_3^{81}Br_3$ [M+H⁺] 896.7621, found 896.7604.

2,3,6,7,14,15-Hexa-tert-butylamino-9,10-dihexyltriptycene 3b. A coupling catalyst was prepared by charging a 20 mL vial with 1,3-bis(2,6-diisopropylphenyl)imidazolium chloride (0.042 g, 0.1 mmol), NaOtBu (0.015 g, 0.15 mmol), Pd(OAc)₂ (0.013 g, 0.05 mmol), toluene (5 mL), and a magnetic stir bar followed by stirring this mixture at ambient temperature for 10 min. The catalyst solution was added to a 30 mL vial containing **2b** (1.00 g, 1.12 mmol) suspended in toluene (20 mL). Afterward, *tert*-butyl amine (0.500 g, 0.71 mL, 6.84 mmol) and NaOtBu (0.644 g, 6.70 mmol) were added and the resulting mixture was sealed and stirred at 110 °C for 16 h. The reaction mixture was cooled to ambient temperature, filtered through Celite, rinsed with toluene and concentrated to afforded the desired product as a dark brown powder (0.920 g, 95% yield). Single light brown crystals were grown from a saturated hexanes solution at 0 °C. m.p. 224–227 °C. ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃, 50 °C): δ 6.85 (s, 6H), 3.40 (br s, 6H), 2.64 (t, J = 8.0 Hz, 4H), 2.17 (m, 4H), 1.75 (p, J = 7.4 Hz, 4H), 1.45 (m, 8H), 1.22 (s, 54H), 0.96 (t, J = 7.3 Hz, 6H). ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃, 50 °C): δ 141.7, 133.9, 115.6, 51.8, 51.3, 32.2, 31.7, 30.2, 29.1, 25.8, 22.7, 14.1. HRMS: m/z calcd for C₅₆H₉₃N₆ [M+H⁺] 849.7378, found 849.7456.

Tris(azolium) 4b. A 50 mL round-bottomed flask was charged with **3b** (0.500 g, 0.581 mmol), triethylorthoformate (20 mL) and a magnetic stir bar. Tetrafluoroboric acid etherate (0.24 mL, 1.74 mmol) was then added and the reaction mixture was stirred in

the open flask at 110 °C for 18 h. After cooling to ambient temperature, the reaction was concentrated to dryness under reduced pressure. The vessel was then charged with Et₂O (30 mL) and the solids which formed were broken up with a spatula, filtered, rinsed with Et₂O (30 mL) and dried under reduced pressure to afford crude product as a tan powder. The crude material was suspended in CH₂Cl₂ (10 mL) and filtered to afford the desired product in pure form as a pale tan solid (0.467 g, 70% yield). Single colorless crystals were grown from slow diffusion of diethyl ether or CH₂Cl₂ into a saturated acetone solution at 0 °C. m.p. 375–380 °C (dec., color changed from tan to dark brown). ¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆, 120 °C): δ 8.89 (s, 3H), 8.06 (s, 6H), 3.46 (t, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 4H), 2.21 (m, 4H), 2.06 (p, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 4H), 1.84 (s, 54H), 1.52-1.60 (m, 8H), 1.04 (t, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 6H). ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆, 120 °C): δ 143.4, 138.8, 128.4, 110.2, 61.0, 52.5, 31.0, 30.3, 28.0, 26.4, 25.0, 21.3, 13.1. HRMS: *m*/*z* calcd for C₅₉H₈₉BN₆F₄ [M²⁺] 484.3584, found 484.3589.

Tris(NHC) 1b. Under an inert atmosphere, a 30 mL vial was charged with **4b** (0.100 g, 0.088 mmol), NaH (0.024 g, 1.00 mmol), KOtBu (0.003 g, 0.027 mmol), THF (7 mL) and a magnetic stir bar. The vial was sealed and the reaction mixture was stirred at ambient temperature for 18 h. Afterward, the mixture was concentrated to dryness under reduced pressure. Hexanes (10 mL) were then added and the resulting mixture was stirred for 5 min at ambient temperature. The mixture was then filtered through a PTFE syringe filter (0.2 µm) and concentrated under reduced pressure to afford the desired product as a pale yellow powder (0.066 g, 86% yield). Single pale yellow crystals were grown from a saturated C₆D₆ solution. m.p. 241–243 °C (dec.) ¹H NMR (600 MHz, C₆D₆, 60 °C): δ 7.88 (s, 6H), 3.33 (t, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 4H), 2.46 (p, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 4H), 1.95 (p, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 4H), 1.78 (s, 54H), 1.84 (s, 54H), 1.57 (p, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 4H), 1.50 (sextet, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 4H), 1.00 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 6H). ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, C₆D₆, 60 °C): δ 225.8, 142.0, 132.9, 108.2, 57.3, 53.2, 32.6, 32.4, 30.9, 30.4, 26.7, 23.1, 14.2. HRMS: *m/z* calcd for C₅₉H₈₇N₆ [M+H⁺] 879.69867, found 879.69755.

Tris(thiourea) 5. A 30 mL vial was charged with **1b** (0.050 g, 0.061 mmol), sulfur (0.100 g, 3.12 mmol), THF (6 mL) and a magnetic stir bar. The vial was then sealed and the mixture was stirred at ambient temperature for 16 h. Afterward, silica gel (0.5 g) was added and the reaction mixture was concentrated to dryness under reduced pressure. The resulting solid mixture was then placed in a fritted funnel and rinsed with hexanes (50 mL) to remove any residual sulfur. The material was then rinsed with methanol (25 mL) and the filtrate was concentrated to afford the desired product (50 mg, 90% yield) as a tan powder. Single colorless crystals were grown from a saturated C₆D₆ solution. m.p. 210–212 °C (dec., color changed from pale yellow to orange). IR (KBr): $v_{CS} = 1337$ cm⁻¹. ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃, 50 °C): δ 7.73 (s, 3H), 2.84 (t, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 4H), 2.20 (m, 4H), 2.05 (s, 54 H), 1.85 (p, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 4H), 1.49 (m, 8H), 1.01 (t, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 6H). ¹³C NMR (150 MHz, CDCl₃, 50 °C): δ 171.6, 140.7, 130.7, 107.5, 63.0, 51.9, 32.2, 31.8, 30.8, 29.2, 25.6, 22.7, 14.1. HRMS: *m/z* calcd for C₅₉H₈₇N₆S₃ [M+H⁺] 975.6154, found 975.6148.



Figure S1. ORTEP diagram of 9,10-dihexylanthracene as generated using the POV-ray engine. Thermal ellipsoids were drawn at 50% probability. Hydrogen atoms have been omitted for clarity.



Figure S2. ORTEP diagram of 9,10-dihexyltriptycene as generated using the POV-ray engine. Thermal ellipsoids were drawn at 50% probability. Hydrogen atoms have been omitted for clarity.



Figure S3. ORTEP diagram of **5** as generated using the POV-ray engine. Thermal ellipsoids were drawn at 50% probability. Hydrogen atoms have been omitted for clarity. Disorder along the mirror plane was appropriately modeled at a 50:50 ratio.

	1b ^c	5^{c}	9,10-dihexylanthracene	9,10-dihexyltriptycene
CCDC	774044	774045	774042	774043
crystallization conditions	Slow evap. from C ₆ D ₆	Slow evap. from C ₆ D ₆	Slow evap. from CHCl ₃	Slow evap. from acetone
formula	$C_{59}H_{86}N_6$	$C_{59} H_{86} N_6 S_3$	C ₂₆ H ₃₄	$C_{32} H_{38}$
$MW (g mol^{-1})$	879.34	1131.73	346.53	422.62
morphology	pale-yellow prisms	colorless blocks	yellow prisms	colorless blocks
dimensions (mm)	$0.36 \times 0.26 \times 0.22$	$0.09 \times 0.07 \times 0.06$	$0.35 \times 0.20 \times 0.10$	$0.53 \times 0.32 \times 0.28$
crystal system	orthorhombic	orthorhombic	monoclinic	monoclinic
space group	Pnma	Pnma	P21/n	C2/c
<i>a</i> (Å)	27.7357(15)	23.074(3)	7.8785(5)	69.417(14)
<i>b</i> (Å)	20.3898(13)	19.486(2)	17.1725(9)	8.3391(17)
<i>c</i> (Å)	16.5894(11)	14.463(2)	8.2929(6)	33.478(7)
α (deg)	90	90	90	90
β (deg)	90	90	117.057(2)	117.24(3)
$\gamma(\text{deg})$	90	90	90	90
$V(Å^3)$	9381.7(10)	6502.91(4)	999.18(11)	17231(6)
Z	8	4	2	28
$\rho_{calc} (g \text{ cm}^{-3})$	1.245	1.156	1.152	1.140
μ (mm ⁻¹)	0.072	0.159	0.064	0.064
F(000)	3856	2456	380	6440
θ range (deg)	3.03 - 22.50	1.77 - 25.00	2.0 - 27.50	2.91 - 25.00
total / unique reflections	6313 / 5135	13457 / 5870	2283 / 1844	15111 / 9689
completeness to 2θ (%)	99.6	99.2	99.6	99.8
data / restraints / parameters	6313 / 242 / 336	13457 / 418 / 481	2283 / 0 / 186	15111 / 62 / 1036
GoOF	2.166	1.162	0.992	0.994
R_1^a	0.1384	0.1391	0.0443	0.0753
wR_2^{b}	0.3212	0.2730	0.1161	0.1613
Largest diff. peak, hole ($e \text{ Å}^{-3}$)	0.418, -0.390	0.668, -0.329	0.292, -0.175	1.208, -0.990

Table S1. Selected crystallographic data for 1b, 5, 9,900 the say anthriad End fan chom 10 and 10 an

 ${}^{a} R_{1} = \Sigma \left[|F_{o}| - |F_{c}|| / \Sigma |F_{o}|; {}^{b} wR_{2} = \left\{ \Sigma \left[w(F_{o}^{2} - F_{c}^{2})^{2} \right] / \Sigma \left[w(F_{o}^{2})^{2} \right] \right\}^{1/2}$. The unit cell contained disordered molecules of benzene which could not be ordered properly and were removed using Squeeze.













ΗN





















S20









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200

180

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file		exp	spin		20	
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pw	3	3.163	rf1	1	17947.2	
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dn		H1	rp i		170.7	
dof		0	1p		-225.6	
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S30







S33







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225.808







S80



























