

*Electronic supplementary information*

**Why does thionating a carbonyl molecule make it a better electron acceptor?**

Yi-Lin Wu\* and Anna I. Wright

School of Chemistry, Cardiff University, Park Place, Cardiff CF10 3AT, United Kingdom  
E-mail: wuyl@cardiff.ac.uk

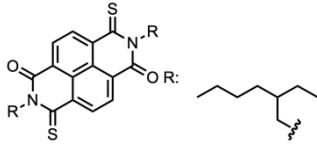
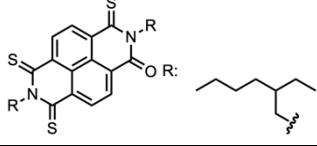
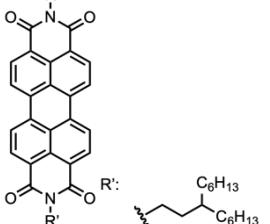
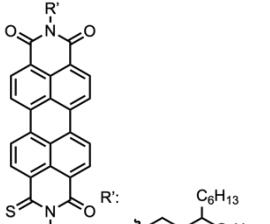
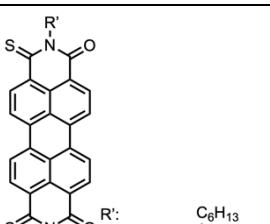
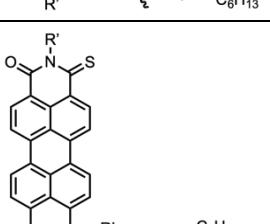
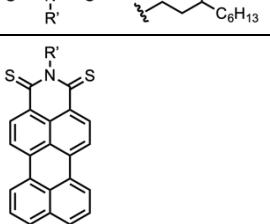
**Table of Contents**

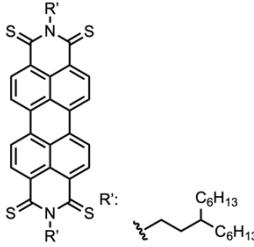
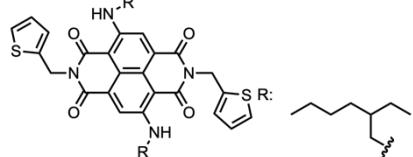
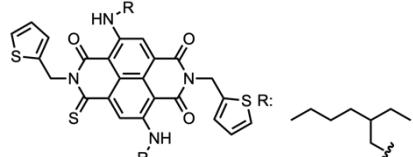
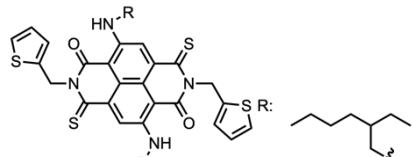
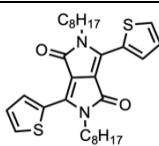
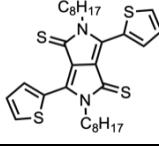
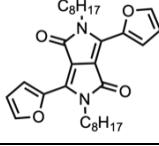
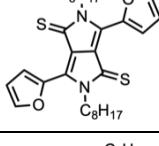
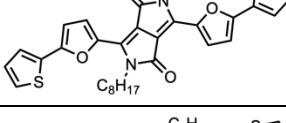
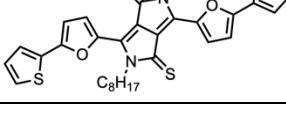
1. Electrochemical reduction potential of (thio)carbonyls from literature .....	S2
2. LUMO plots.....	S14
3. Leading (> 5%) NBO contributions to LUMO .....	S15
4. Electrostatic potential map and Mulliken charges.....	S18
5. Orbital interactions in (thio)ester.....	S20
6. Cartesian coordinates for optimized geometries .....	S21
7. References .....	S25

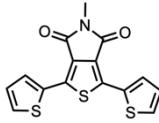
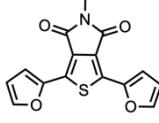
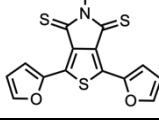
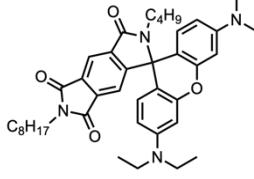
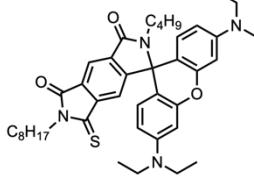
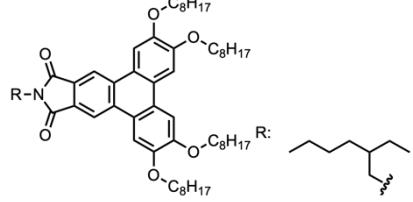
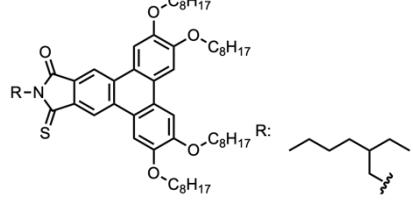
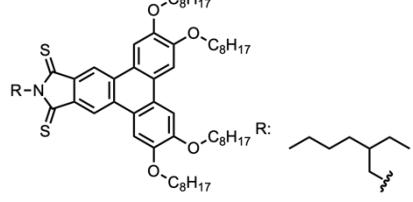
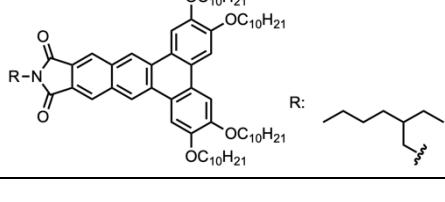
## 1. Electrochemical reduction potential of (thio)carbonyls from literature

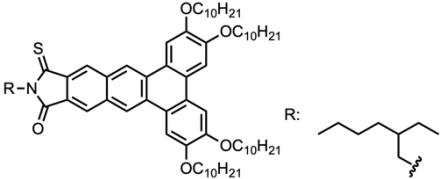
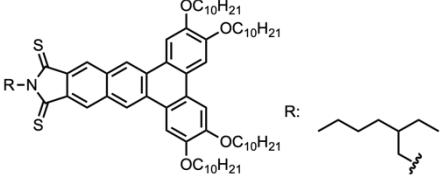
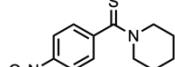
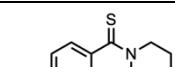
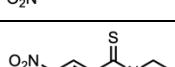
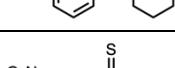
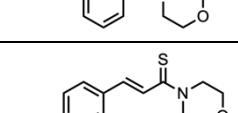
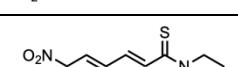
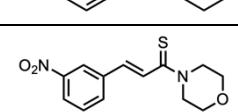
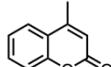
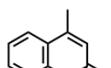
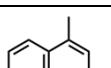
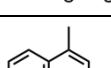
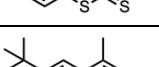
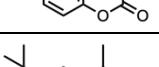
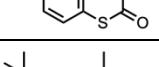
**Table S1.** Reported Reduction Potential of (Thio)carbonyls.

Entry	Compound	Reported <i>E</i> <sub>RED</sub> <sup>a</sup> (V)	<i>E</i> <sub>RED</sub> vs. SCE (V)	Reference
1.1 <sup>b</sup>		-1.07 <sup>c</sup> , -1.53 <sup>c</sup>	-0.61, -1.07	1
1.2 <sup>b</sup>		-0.88, -1.29	-0.42, -0.83	1
1.3 <sup>b</sup>		-0.73, -1.05	-0.27, -0.59	1
1.4 <sup>b</sup>		-0.75, -1.08	-0.29, -0.62	1
1.5 <sup>b</sup>		-0.61, -0.91	-0.15, -0.45	1
2.1 <sup>b</sup>		-1.82	-1.36	1
2.2 <sup>b</sup>		-1.44	-0.98	1
3.1 <sup>c</sup>		-0.91	-0.68	2
3.2 <sup>c</sup>		-0.62	-0.39	2
3.3 <sup>c</sup>		-0.55	-0.32	2

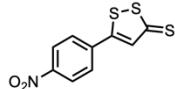
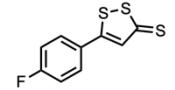
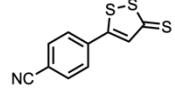
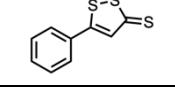
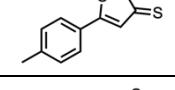
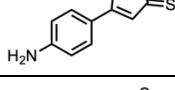
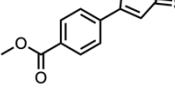
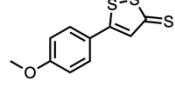
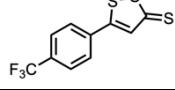
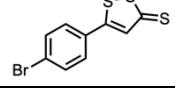
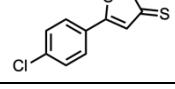
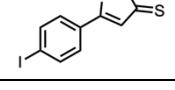
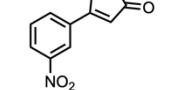
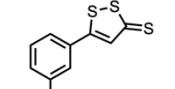
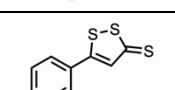
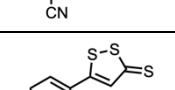
3.4 <sup>c</sup>		-0.59	-0.36	2
3.5 <sup>c</sup>		-0.42	-0.19	2
4.1 <sup>d</sup>		-0.68 <sup>e</sup> , -0.91 <sup>e</sup>	-0.22, -0.45	3
4.2 <sup>d</sup>		-0.55, -0.72	-0.09, -0.26	3
4.3 <sup>d</sup>		-0.48, -0.57	-0.02, -0.11	3
4.4 <sup>d</sup>		-0.51, -0.61	-0.05, -0.15	3
4.5 <sup>d</sup>		-0.36, -0.45	0.10, 0.01	3

4.6 <sup>d</sup>		-0.23, -0.33	0.23, 0.13	3
5.1 <sup>f</sup>		-1.39, -1.76	-0.93, -1.30	4
5.2 <sup>f</sup>		-1.17, -1.52	-0.71, -1.06	4
5.3 <sup>f</sup>		-1.03, -1.34	-0.57, -0.88	4
6.1 <sup>g</sup>		3.92 <sup>e</sup>	-1.25	5
6.2 <sup>g</sup>		4.06 <sup>e</sup>	-1.11	5
6.3 <sup>g</sup>		3.89 <sup>e</sup>	-1.28	5
6.4 <sup>g</sup>		4.14 <sup>e</sup>	-1.03	5
6.5 <sup>g</sup>		4.01 <sup>e</sup>	-1.16	5
6.6 <sup>g</sup>		4.08 <sup>e</sup>	-1.09	5

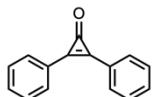
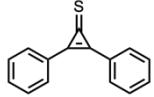
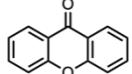
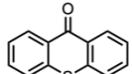
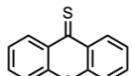
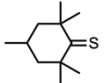
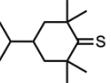
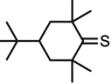
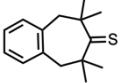
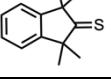
6.7 <sup>g</sup>		3.12 <sup>e</sup>	-2.05	5
6.8 <sup>g</sup>		3.22 <sup>e</sup>	-1.95	5
6.9 <sup>g</sup>		4.01 <sup>e</sup>	-1.16	5
7.1 <sup>h</sup>		-1.86	-1.40	6
7.2 <sup>h</sup>		-1.42	-0.96	6
8.1 <sup>i</sup>		3.09	-1.71	7
8.2 <sup>i</sup>		3.14	-1.66	7
8.3 <sup>i</sup>		3.50	-1.30	7
8.4 <sup>i</sup>		2.89	-1.91	8

8.5 <sup>i</sup>		2.91	-1.89	8
8.6 <sup>j</sup>		3.30	-1.50	8
9.1 <sup>j</sup>		-0.80	-	9
9.2 <sup>j</sup>		-0.79	-	9
9.3 <sup>j</sup>		-0.82	-	9
9.4 <sup>j</sup>		-0.81	-	9
9.5 <sup>j</sup>		-0.73	-	9
9.6 <sup>j</sup>		-0.87	-	9
9.7 <sup>j</sup>		-0.84	-	9
10.1 <sup>k</sup>		-1.81	-1.81	10
10.2 <sup>l</sup>		-1.13	-1.13	11
10.3 <sup>l</sup>		-0.75 <sup>e</sup>	-0.75	11
10.4 <sup>l</sup>		-0.66	-0.66	11
10.5 <sup>l</sup>		-1.34 <sup>e</sup>	-1.34	11
10.6 <sup>l</sup>		-1.17	-1.17	11
10.7 <sup>l</sup>		-0.84 <sup>e</sup>	-0.84	11

10.8 <sup>l</sup>		-0.71	-0.71	11
11.1 <sup>l</sup>		-1.41	-1.41	12
11.2 <sup>l</sup>		-1.27	-1.27	12
11.3 <sup>l</sup>		-1.07	-1.07	12
11.4 <sup>l</sup>		-0.72	-0.72	12
11.5 <sup>l</sup>		-1.32	-1.32	12
11.6 <sup>l</sup>		-1.16	-1.16	12
11.7 <sup>l</sup>		-0.68	-0.68	12
11.8 <sup>l</sup>		-0.58 <sup>e</sup>	-0.58	12
12.1 <sup>m</sup>		-1.35	-0.39	13
12.2 <sup>m</sup>		-0.88	0.08	13
12.3 <sup>m</sup>		-1.35	-0.39	13
12.4 <sup>m</sup>		-1.00	-0.04	13
12.5 <sup>m</sup>		-0.73	0.23	13
13.1 <sup>n</sup>		-0.83	-0.83	14

13.2°		-1.22	-0.75	15
13.3°		-1.53	-1.06	15
13.4°		-1.40	-0.93	15
13.5°		-1.57	-1.10	15
13.6°		-1.58	-1.11	15
13.7°		-1.66	-1.19	15
13.8°		-1.42	-0.95	15
13.9°		-1.60	-1.13	15
13.10°		-1.43	-0.96	15
13.11°		-1.50	-1.03	15
13.12°		-1.51	-1.04	15
13.13°		-1.45	-0.98	15
14.1°		-0.97	-0.97	14
14.2°		-1.40	-0.93	15
14.3°		-1.46	-0.99	15
14.4°		-1.42	-0.95	15

14.5°		-1.48	-1.01	15
14.6°		-1.48	-1.01	15
14.7°		-1.45	-0.98	15
14.8°		-1.58	-1.11	15
15.1 <sup>p</sup>		-2.31	-2.31	16
15.2 <sup>p</sup>		-1.56	-1.56	16
15.3 <sup>p</sup>		-1.48, -2.41	-1.48, -2.41	17
15.4 <sup>p</sup>		-1.42	-1.42	16
15.5 <sup>p</sup>		-2.21	-2.21	16
15.6 <sup>p</sup>		-1.55	-1.55	16
15.7 <sup>p</sup>		-1.49	-1.49	16
15.8 <sup>p</sup>		-1.71, -2.22	-1.71, -2.22	16
15.9 <sup>p</sup>		-2.24	-2.24	16
15.10 <sup>q</sup>		-1.91	-1.91	18
15.11 <sup>p</sup>		-1.56, -1.93	-1.56, -1.93	16
15.12 <sup>p</sup>		-1.13, -1.84	-1.13, -1.84	16

16.1 <sup>r</sup>		-1.70	-1.70	19
16.2 <sup>p</sup>		-1.40	-1.40	16
17.1 <sup>p</sup>		-1.65	-1.65	20
17.2 <sup>p</sup>		-1.62	-1.62	20
17.3 <sup>q</sup>		-1.12	-1.12	21
18.1 <sup>q</sup>		-1.99	-1.99	18
18.2 <sup>q</sup>		-1.88	-1.88	18
18.3 <sup>q</sup>		-1.93	-1.93	18
18.4 <sup>q</sup>		-1.86	-1.86	18
18.5 <sup>q</sup>		-1.92	-1.92	18
18.6 <sup>q</sup>		-1.93	-1.93	18
18.7 <sup>q</sup>		-1.85	-1.85	18
18.8 <sup>q</sup>		-1.86	-1.86	18
18.9 <sup>q</sup>		-1.84	-1.84	18
18.10 <sup>q</sup>		-1.77	-1.77	18
18.11 <sup>q</sup>		-1.61	-1.61	18
18.12 <sup>q</sup>		-1.77	-1.77	18

18.13 <sup>q</sup>		-1.55	-1.55	18
18.14 <sup>q</sup>		-1.36	-1.36	18
18.15 <sup>q</sup>		-1.63	-1.63	18
18.16 <sup>q</sup>		-1.44	-1.44	18
19.1 <sup>q</sup>		-1.94	-1.94	18
19.2 <sup>q</sup>		-1.77	-1.77	18
19.3 <sup>q</sup>		-1.76	-1.76	18
19.4 <sup>q</sup>		-1.43	-1.43	18
19.5 <sup>q</sup>		-1.51	-1.51	18
19.6 <sup>q</sup>		-1.41	-1.41	18
19.7 <sup>q</sup>		-1.20	-1.20	18
20.1 <sup>q</sup>		-1.66	-1.66	18
20.2 <sup>q</sup>		-1.56	-1.56	18
21.1 <sup>s</sup>		-1.57	-1.57	22
21.2 <sup>s</sup>		-1.04	-1.04	22
21.3 <sup>s</sup>		-1.75	-1.75	22
21.4 <sup>s</sup>		-0.96	-0.96	22

21.5		(de-chlorination)	(de-chlorination)	22
21.6 <sup>s</sup>		-0.90	-0.90	22
21.7 <sup>s</sup>		-1.86	-1.86	22
21.8 <sup>s</sup>		-1.19	-1.19	22
21.9 <sup>t</sup>		-2.16	-2.12	23
21.10 <sup>t</sup>		-1.51	-1.47	23
21.11 <sup>s</sup>		-0.67	-0.67	22
21.12 <sup>s</sup>		-0.39	-0.39	22
21.13 <sup>s</sup>		-1.65	-1.65	22
21.14 <sup>s</sup>		-0.95	-0.95	22
21.15 <sup>s</sup>		-1.14	-1.14	22
21.16 <sup>s</sup>		-0.82	-0.82	22

<sup>a</sup> The electrochemical conditions and their conversion factors (for vs. SCE) for each entry are given individually.

<sup>b</sup> 0.1 M *n*Bu<sub>4</sub>NBF<sub>4</sub> supporting electrolyte in CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>, V vs. Fc/Fc<sup>+</sup>, Pt wire counter electrode, SCE reference electrode and glassy carbon working electrode; conversion factor: (*E*<sub>red</sub> vs. SCE) = (*E*<sub>red</sub> vs. Fc/Fc<sup>+</sup>) + 0.46.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>c</sup> 0.1 M *n*Bu<sub>4</sub>NPF<sub>6</sub> supporting electrolyte in CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>, V vs. Pt/Pt<sub>x</sub>O; conversion factor: (*E*<sub>red</sub> vs. SCE) = (*E*<sub>red</sub> vs. Pt/Pt<sub>x</sub>O<sup>+</sup>) + 0.23.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>d</sup> 0.1 M *n*Bu<sub>4</sub>NPF<sub>6</sub> supporting electrolyte in CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>, V vs. Fc/Fc<sup>+</sup>, Pt wire counter electrode, Ag reference electrode, Pt button working electrode; conversion factor: (*E*<sub>red</sub> vs. SCE) = (*E*<sub>red</sub> vs. Fc/Fc<sup>+</sup>) + 0.46.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>e</sup> Irreversible peak potential.

<sup>f</sup> 0.1 M *n*Bu<sub>4</sub>NPF<sub>6</sub> supporting electrolyte in CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>, V vs. Fc/Fc<sup>+</sup>, Pt wire counter electrode, Pt reference electrode, glassy carbon working electrode; conversion factor: (*E*<sub>red</sub> vs. SCE) = (*E*<sub>red</sub> vs. Fc/Fc<sup>+</sup>) + 0.46.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>g</sup> 0.1 M *n*Bu<sub>4</sub>NCIO<sub>4</sub> supporting electrolyte in CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>, electron affinity (EA) reported, Pt wire counter electrode, Ag reference electrode, Pt button working electrode; conversion factor: (*E*<sub>red</sub> vs. SCE) = EA - 5.17.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>h</sup> 0.1 M *n*Bu<sub>4</sub>NPF<sub>6</sub> supporting electrolyte in CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>, V vs. Fc/Fc<sup>+</sup>, Pt wire counter electrode, Ag/AgNO<sub>3</sub> reference electrode, glassy carbon working electrode; conversion factor: (*E*<sub>red</sub> vs. SCE) = (*E*<sub>red</sub> vs. Fc/Fc<sup>+</sup>) + 0.46.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>i</sup> 0.1 M *n*Bu<sub>4</sub>NPF<sub>6</sub> supporting electrolyte in CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>, LUMO (reported) vs. Fc/Fc<sup>+</sup>; conversion factor: (*E*<sub>red</sub> vs. SCE) = LUMO – 4.8.<sup>7,8</sup>

<sup>j</sup> 0.1 M *n*Bu<sub>4</sub>NClO<sub>4</sub> supporting electrolyte in DMSO, V vs. Ag/Ag<sup>+</sup>, Pt wire counter electrode, Ag/Ag<sup>+</sup> reference electrode, Pt button working electrode; cannot convert the given *E*<sub>red</sub>.

<sup>k</sup> DMF, V vs. SCE, glassy carbon counter electrode, Ag/AgCl in EtOH/LiCl (salt) reference electrode, hanging Hg working electrode.

<sup>l</sup> Tetrapropylammonium bromide supporting electrolyte in DMF, V vs. SCE, Ag/Ag<sup>+</sup>/AgBr/Br<sup>-</sup> reference electrode, mercury working electrode.

<sup>m</sup> 0.2 M Et<sub>4</sub>NClO<sub>4</sub> supporting electrolyte in DMF, V vs. Ag/AgI, Ag/AgI reference electrode, mercury working electrode; conversion factor: (*E*<sub>red</sub> vs. SCE) = (*E*<sub>red</sub> vs. Fc/Fc<sup>+</sup>) + 0.96.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>n</sup> 0.1 M *n*Bu<sub>4</sub>NBF<sub>4</sub> supporting electrolyte in DMF, V vs. SCE, graphite rod counter electrode, SCE reference electrode, glassy carbon working electrode.

<sup>o</sup> 0.1 M *n*Bu<sub>4</sub>NBF<sub>4</sub> supporting electrolyte in DMF, V vs. Fc/Fc<sup>+</sup>, graphite rod counter electrode, Ag/AgCl reference electrode, Pt disk working electrode; conversion factor: (*E*<sub>red</sub> vs. SCE) = (*E*<sub>red</sub> vs. Fc/Fc<sup>+</sup>) + 0.47.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>p</sup> MeCN, V vs. SCE, no additional details given.

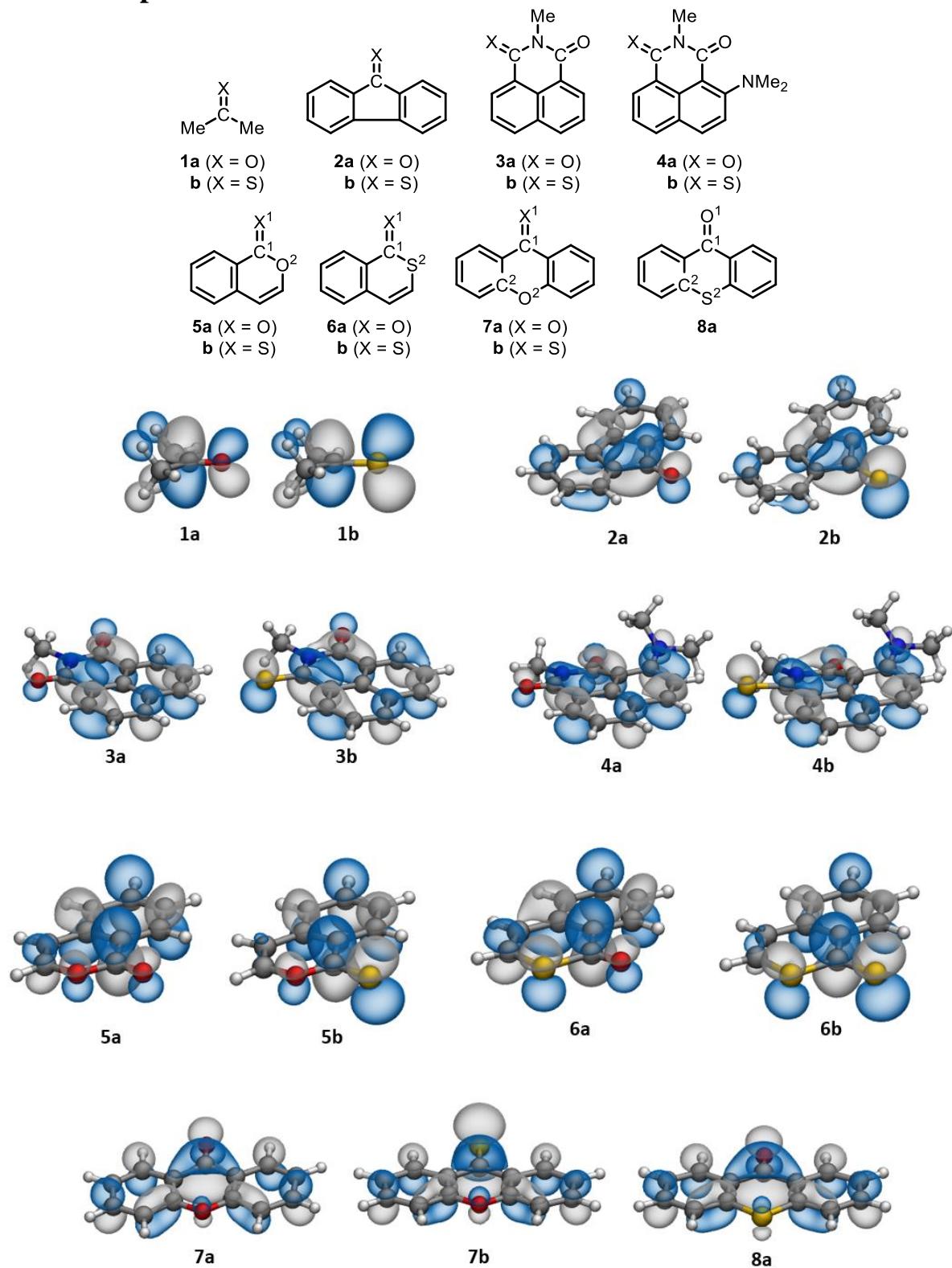
<sup>q</sup> 0.1 M *n*Bu<sub>4</sub>NPF<sub>6</sub> supporting electrolyte in MeCN, V vs. SCE.

<sup>r</sup> 0.1 M Triethylamine phosphate supporting electrolyte in DMF, V vs. SCE, glassy carbon working electrode.

<sup>s</sup> 0.1 M Triammonium phosphate acid supporting electrolyte in MeCN, V vs. SCE.

<sup>t</sup> 0.05 M Triethylamine phosphate supporting electrolyte in MeCN, V vs. SCE, cylinder Pt counter electrode, Ag/AgCl (in 0.1 M TEAP in MeCN) reference electrode, dropping Hg working electrode; conversion factor (*E*<sub>red</sub> vs. SCE) = (*E*<sub>red</sub> vs. Ag/AgCl) + 0.044.<sup>27,28</sup>

## 2. LUMO plots

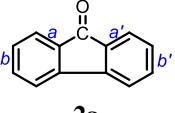
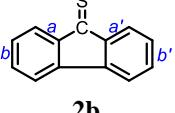
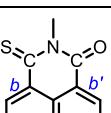


**Fig. S1.** LUMO of **1–8**. Colour code for molecular structure: C = grey, H = white, O = red, S = yellow. Orbitals are plotted at isosurface = 0.04 a.u. Besides the larger lobe on sulfur than that on the analogous oxygen, a high similarity in LUMO can be seen for each C=O/C=S pair.

### 3. Leading (> 5%) NBO contributions to LUMO

The LUMO of **1–8** can be expressed in terms of a complete orthonormal set of localised NBOs:  $\text{LUMO} = \sum c_i \times \text{NBO}_i$ , and the coefficient  $c$  represents the percentage contribution ( $100 \times c^2$ ) of each NBO to LUMO.

**Table S2.** NBO Contributions to LUMO of **1–8**.

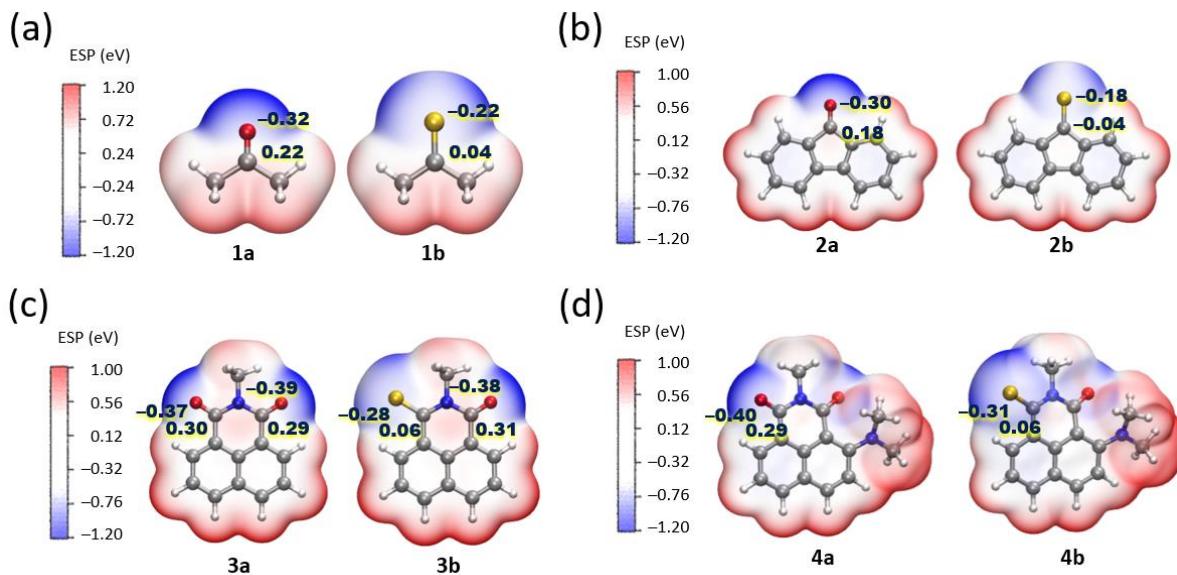
Compound	Contributing NBO	Coefficient
 <b>1a</b>	$\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{O})$	0.892
 <b>1b</b>	$\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{S})$	0.912
 <b>2a</b>	$\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{O})$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, a)$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, a')$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, b)$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, b')$	0.588 0.343 0.343 0.330 0.330
 <b>2b</b>	$\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{O})$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, a)$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, a')$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, b)$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, b')$	0.723 0.286 0.286 0.261 0.261
 <b>3a</b>	$\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{O}, a)$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{O}, a')$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, b)$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, b')$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, c)$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, c')$	-0.348 0.351 0.442 -0.443 -0.383 0.384
 <b>3b</b>	$\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{S})$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{O})$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, b)$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, b')$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, c)$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, c')$	-0.502 0.358 0.409 -0.378 -0.347 0.308

	$\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{O}, a)$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{O}, a')$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, b)$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, b')$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, c)$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, c')$	-0.326 -0.321 -0.436 0.374 0.352 0.448
	$\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{S})$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{O})$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, b)$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, b')$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, c)$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, c')$	-0.474 -0.330 -0.402 0.316 0.325 0.371
	$\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{O}^1)$ out-of-plane lone pair ( $\text{O}^2$ ) $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, a)$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, b)$ $\pi(\text{C}=\text{C}, c)$	0.425 -0.234 -0.532 0.437 -0.348
	$\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{S})$ out-of-plane lone pair ( $\text{O}^2$ ) $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, a)$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, b)$ $\pi(\text{C}=\text{C}, c)$	-0.660 0.254 0.355 -0.414 0.264
	$\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{O})$ out-of-plane lone pair ( $\text{S}^2$ ) $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, a)$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, b)$ $\pi(\text{C}=\text{C}, c)$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, d)$ $\pi(\text{C}=\text{C}, b)$	0.454 -0.304 -0.518 0.342 -0.327 -0.287 0.241
	$\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{S}^1)$ out-of-plane lone pair ( $\text{S}^2$ ) $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, a)$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, b)$ $\pi(\text{C}=\text{C}, c)$	-0.685 0.336 0.329 -0.346 0.240

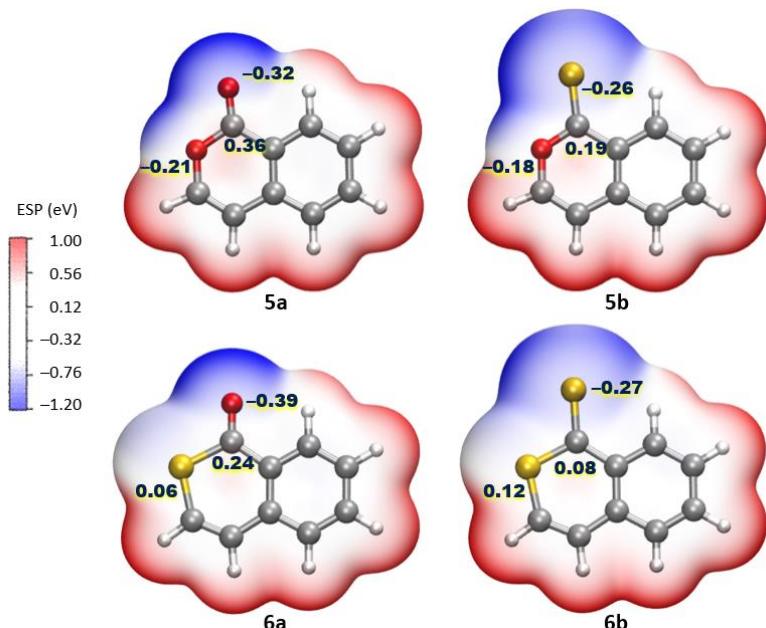
	$\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{O}^1)$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, a)$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, a')$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, b)$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, b')$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, c)$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, c')$	-0.560 -0.386 -0.386 0.263 0.263 0.231 0.231
	$\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{S})$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, a)$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, a')$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, b)$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, b')$	-0.687 -0.313 -0.313 0.241 0.241
	$\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{O})$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, a)$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, a')$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, b)$ $\pi^*(\text{C}=\text{C}, b')$	-0.585 -0.354 -0.354 0.259 0.259

#### 4. Electrostatic potential map and Mulliken charges

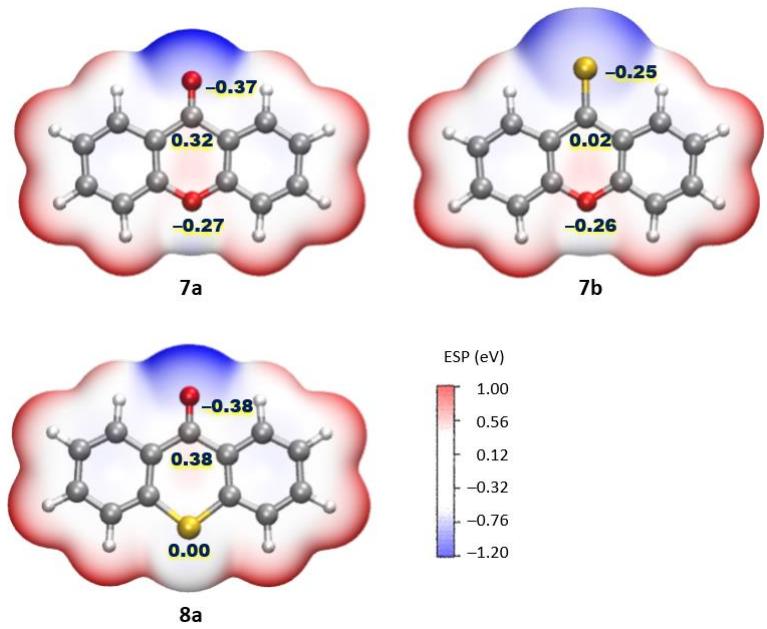
Fig. S2–S4 show the molecular electrostatic potential map of **1–8**. In each C=O/C=S pair, the lighter (paler) blue colour around the sulfur atom in C=S indicates the less negative electrostatic potential around this region, which is corroborated by the smaller negative atomic Mulliken charge, reflecting the lower electronegativity of sulfur than oxygen (cf. Pauling's original definition of electronegativity based on bond ionicity/polarisation). When the sulfur atom is substituted at a position  $\pi$ -conjugated with C=O/C=S, its atomic charge is close to zero.



**Fig. S2.** Molecular electrostatic potential map of (a) **1**, (b) **2**, (c) **3**, and (d) **4**. Mulliken charges of the C, O, and S atoms in C=O/C=S functionalities are indicated next to the respective atoms.

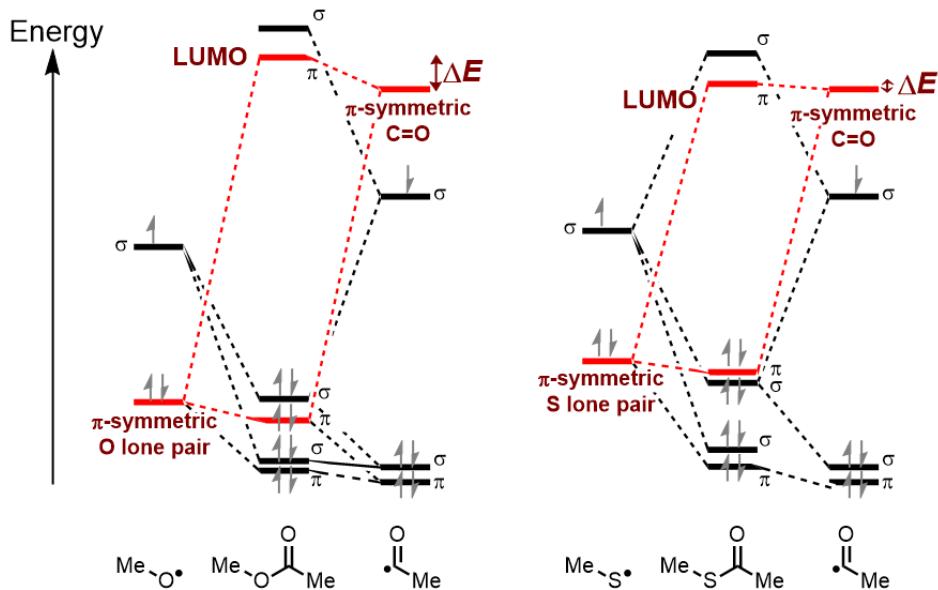


**Fig. S3.** Molecular electrostatic potential map of isochromenone derivatives **5–6**. Mulliken charges of the C, O, and S atoms in C=O/C=S and conjugated O/S functionalities are indicated next to the respective atoms.



**Fig. S4.** Molecular electrostatic potential map of xantheneone derivatives **7–8**. Mulliken charges of the C, O, and S atoms in C=O/C=S and conjugated O/S functionalities are indicated next to the respective atoms.

## 5. Orbital interactions in (thio)ester



**Fig. S5.** Orbital interaction diagrams for the formation of frontier molecular orbitals (MOs) of methyl acetate (MeOAc, left) and methyl thioacetate (MeSAc, right) considering the fragment orbitals (FOs) of Ac<sup>•</sup> radical and MeO<sup>•</sup> or MeS<sup>•</sup> radical, respectively. The symmetry ( $\sigma$  or  $\pi$ ) with respect to the molecular plane is indicated next to each MO/FO.

Due to the weaker coupling between the S lone pair FO in MeS<sup>•</sup> and the  $\pi^*$  C=O FO in Ac<sup>•</sup>, the overall antibonding character (signified by  $\Delta E$ ) is smaller in MeSAc, resulting in lower LUMO energy. The orbital interactions highlighted in red are analogous to those shown in Fig. 3a in the main text.

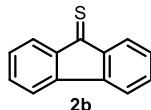
## 6. Cartesian coordinates for optimized geometries



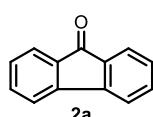
O	0.000000	-1.391087	0.000000
C	0.000000	-0.186643	0.000000
C	-1.282913	0.610731	0.001499
H	-2.138248	-0.055366	0.085428
H	-1.284774	1.328158	0.825060
H	-1.357356	1.187095	-0.924020
C	1.282913	0.610731	-0.001500
H	1.284773	1.328159	-0.825060
H	1.357357	1.187094	0.924020
H	2.138248	-0.055366	-0.085429



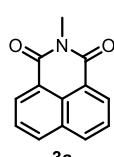
S	1.367990	0.000000	0.000000
C	-0.249486	0.000000	0.000000
C	-1.057754	1.262263	0.000000
H	-0.425025	2.145505	0.000003
H	-1.711952	1.282264	-0.876810
H	-1.711955	1.282261	0.876808
C	-1.057754	-1.262263	0.000000
H	-1.711946	-1.282266	0.876814
H	-1.711961	-1.282259	-0.876803
H	-0.425025	-2.145505	-0.000009



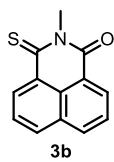
S	0.000000	-2.900782	-0.000002
C	0.000000	-1.282351	0.000000
C	3.007474	1.666688	0.000000
C	1.650459	1.981290	0.000000
C	0.737147	0.947543	0.000000
C	1.173442	-0.383990	0.000000
C	2.518149	-0.695725	0.000001
C	3.438237	0.346644	0.000001
C	-1.173442	-0.383990	0.000000
C	-0.737147	0.947543	0.000000
C	-1.650459	1.981290	0.000000
H	-1.328024	3.015025	-0.000001
C	-3.007474	1.666688	0.000000
C	-3.438237	0.346644	0.000001
C	-2.518149	-0.695725	0.000001
H	3.738842	2.465177	0.000000
H	1.328024	3.015025	-0.000001
H	2.836278	-1.730939	0.000001
H	4.498418	0.129338	0.000001
H	-3.738842	2.465177	0.000000
H	-4.498418	0.129338	0.000001
H	-2.836278	-1.730939	0.000001



			Za
O	0.000000	2.779277	0.000001
C	0.000000	1.576200	0.000004
C	3.007575	-1.388336	-0.000001
C	1.649122	-1.698446	0.000001
C	0.740374	-0.659948	0.000002
C	1.186723	0.663291	0.000000
C	2.528387	0.975484	-0.000002
C	3.445908	-0.071053	-0.000002
C	-1.186723	0.663291	0.000000
C	-0.740374	-0.659948	0.000002
C	-1.649122	-1.698446	0.000001
H	-1.323940	-2.731322	0.000001
C	-3.007575	-1.388336	-0.000001
C	-3.445908	-0.071053	-0.000002
C	-2.528387	0.975484	-0.000002
H	3.735262	-2.190250	-0.000001
H	1.323940	-2.731322	0.000001
H	2.849078	2.009731	-0.000002
H	4.507361	0.140187	-0.000003
H	-3.735262	-2.190250	-0.000001
H	-4.507361	0.140187	-0.000003
H	-2.849078	2.009731	-0.000002

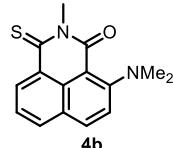


			3a
O	-2.073340	2.287451	-0.000002
C	-1.448059	1.252107	0.000000
O	-2.115900	-2.239990	-0.000004
C	-1.461066	-1.222521	-0.000001
N	-2.095467	0.016632	0.000002
C	-3.552875	-0.007814	0.000003
C	0.034751	1.225327	0.000000
C	0.019941	-1.223399	0.000000
H	-3.913766	-0.533611	0.882511
H	-3.904919	1.017710	0.000042
H	-3.913772	-0.533543	-0.882543
C	0.726170	-0.003462	0.000001
C	0.729335	2.406889	-0.000001
C	0.697619	-2.414441	0.000000
C	2.139250	-0.012832	0.000001
C	2.134301	2.404468	-0.000001
H	0.175324	3.336257	-0.000001
C	2.102553	-2.430358	0.000001
C	2.823768	1.223451	0.000000
C	2.807216	-1.258262	0.000001
H	2.668339	3.345516	-0.000001
H	2.624537	-3.378148	0.000001
H	3.907375	1.221498	0.000000
H	3.890755	-1.270505	0.000001
H	0.130899	-3.336210	-0.000001

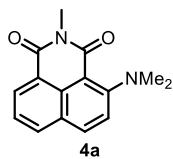


S	2.857424	-1.557071	0.000029
C	1.564528	-0.535441	0.000002
O	0.957372	2.965081	-0.000005
C	0.710064	1.782283	-0.000005
N	1.745973	0.829718	-0.000015
C	3.106634	1.356496	-0.000025
C	0.171815	-1.033259	-0.000005
C	-0.670911	1.268018	0.000003
H	3.045133	2.438132	-0.000073
H	3.638367	1.001757	0.881440
H	3.638382	1.001676	-0.881447
C	-0.907507	-0.118927	-0.000001
C	-0.101554	-2.381489	-0.000015
C	-1.715968	2.157599	0.000011
C	-2.241849	-0.589756	0.000000
C	-1.421508	-2.855129	-0.000018
H	0.726161	-3.077273	-0.000021
C	-3.039672	1.694168	0.000015
C	-2.472671	-1.981997	-0.000009
C	-3.295726	0.350595	0.000009
H	-1.599280	-3.922410	-0.000027
H	-3.855413	2.404857	0.000022
H	-3.493180	-2.345996	-0.000009
H	-4.316789	-0.012236	0.000011
H	-1.497015	3.216993	0.000013

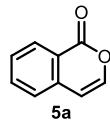
H	-3.283074	-2.036328	0.509208
H	-2.168705	-1.253798	1.630838
H	-3.895244	-0.898356	1.742720
C	-4.176388	0.640485	-0.228727
H	-4.915933	-0.144595	-0.385836
H	-4.564347	1.325080	0.536400
H	-4.068991	1.180218	-1.168097
C	0.942183	-3.487938	-0.265290
H	0.736480	-3.764301	-1.298975
H	1.938791	-3.809587	0.016774
H	0.193965	-3.960091	0.368279



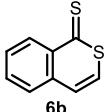
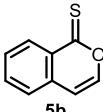
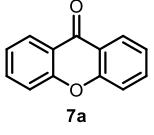
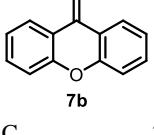
S	3.624407	-1.223226	0.365832
C	2.066292	-0.762788	0.057650
O	-1.010232	-2.255805	-0.840953
C	-0.277409	-1.394487	-0.400064
N	1.095583	-1.688303	-0.218319
C	1.646281	0.646275	0.026565
C	0.272150	0.975880	-0.034078
C	-0.718078	-0.040249	-0.073707
C	2.586957	1.657858	0.059293
C	2.215287	3.000873	0.022909
C	0.887115	3.336581	-0.044069
C	-0.098331	2.339356	-0.071041
C	-1.477618	2.651396	-0.151687
C	-2.426758	1.686655	-0.118280
C	-2.081840	0.303582	-0.002379
H	3.630753	1.380573	0.113857
H	0.581377	4.375869	-0.079184
H	-3.467244	1.974847	-0.117991
H	2.976683	3.768929	0.044267
N	-3.076977	-0.595165	0.214322
H	-1.773689	3.692629	-0.206138

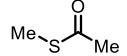


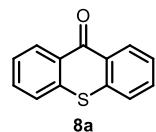
O	3.112426	-1.933036	0.293733
C	2.062171	-1.351732	0.122672
O	-1.286430	-2.160294	-0.686223
C	-0.376624	-1.454927	-0.296805
N	0.879662	-2.041503	-0.106273
C	1.959345	0.120129	0.095418
C	0.701933	0.751705	-0.003497
C	-0.497061	-0.010527	-0.050588
C	3.117244	0.861460	0.158151
C	3.077825	2.256762	0.104782
C	1.868669	2.893409	-0.014895
C	0.670521	2.162292	-0.069017
C	-0.592333	2.789259	-0.203097
C	-1.740653	2.071769	-0.190159
C	-1.738265	0.648562	-0.036600
H	4.057278	0.332684	0.245313
H	1.821187	3.975023	-0.069172
H	-2.684213	2.595047	-0.233423
H	3.996352	2.826224	0.151255
N	-2.929207	0.018477	0.156544
H	-0.635065	3.869326	-0.283507
C	-3.076841	-1.112164	1.048696



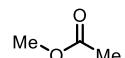
C	2.408948	0.981787	-0.000019
C	1.095413	1.398530	-0.000177
C	0.067435	0.456899	-0.000077
C	0.357444	-0.912798	0.000183

C	1.694494	-1.319327	0.000341				
C	2.704840	-0.381354	0.000240				
H	3.209538	1.709597	-0.000097				
H	0.836261	2.448817	-0.000378				
C	-1.326982	0.925859	-0.000250				
C	-0.747842	-1.839722	0.000277				
H	1.928432	-2.376780	0.000542				
H	3.737710	-0.706408	0.000363				
C	-1.992080	-1.366139	0.000111				
H	-0.579156	-2.906762	0.000478				
H	-2.883757	-1.976260	0.000162				
O	-1.681926	2.067635	-0.000462				
O	-2.295456	-0.049462	-0.000143				
							
C	-2.138354	-1.643828	0.000048				
C	-0.767003	-1.536691	-0.000113				
C	-0.153729	-0.279165	-0.000020				
C	-0.952948	0.876593	0.000239				
C	-2.345489	0.750539	0.000401				
C	-2.930871	-0.494966	0.000307				
H	-2.602452	-2.621238	-0.000026				
H	-0.137727	-2.416071	-0.000313				
C	1.304800	-0.160702	-0.000187				
C	-0.300568	2.159536	0.000327				
H	-2.956432	1.644806	0.000600				
H	-4.009917	-0.583550	0.000434				
C	1.028815	2.203100	0.000159				
H	-0.872443	3.076104	0.000523				
H	1.627278	3.101849	0.000201				
S	2.377227	-1.390021	-0.000480				
O	1.806017	1.098991	-0.000087				
							
C	2.726091	0.902805	0.000015				
C	1.430378	1.366349	-0.000148				
C	0.350927	0.477213	-0.000057				
C	0.585460	-0.908625	0.000195				
C	1.913731	-1.356236	0.000359				
C	2.966642	-0.469901	0.000270				
H	3.552802	1.600994	-0.000054				
H	1.215803	2.426392	-0.000343				
C	-0.994736	1.087990	-0.000235				
C	-0.482649	-1.882607	0.000296				
H	2.103962	-2.422638	0.000556				
H	3.983390	-0.841973	0.000399				
C	-1.781087	-1.574445	0.000155				
H	-0.199864	-2.928415	0.000492				
H	-2.543207	-2.343220	0.000231				
O	-1.197465	2.276032	-0.000478				
S	-2.426357	0.027834	-0.000160				
							
C	-3.556765	-0.966475	0.000012				
S	1.857311	-1.971762	-0.000473				
S	2.109896	0.861964	-0.000117				
C	-2.332229	-1.597228	-0.000004				
C	-1.173039	-0.826595	-0.000010				
C	-1.236970	0.563797	-0.000003				
C	-2.491435	1.179177	0.000013				
C	-3.643070	0.427125	0.000022				
C	0.000000	1.365280	-0.000013				
C	1.236970	0.563797	-0.000003				
C	1.173039	-0.826595	-0.000008				
C	2.332229	-1.597228	-0.000003				
H	2.247189	-2.675474	-0.000009				
C	3.556765	-0.966475	0.000012				
C	3.643070	0.427125	0.000021				
C	2.491435	1.179177	0.000013				
H	-4.460433	-1.562728	0.000018				
H	-2.247189	-2.675474	-0.000011				
H	-2.519327	2.261154	0.000018				
H	-4.611033	0.910017	0.000037				
H	4.460433	-1.562728	0.000018				
H	4.611033	0.910017	0.000035				
H	2.519327	2.261154	0.000018				
O	0.000000	2.579040	-0.000029				
O	0.000000	-1.505943	-0.000023				
							
C	3.550775	1.236578	0.000001				
C	2.319223	1.847409	0.000000				
C	1.168868	1.062433	-0.000001				
C	1.230721	-0.332032	-0.000001				

C	2.504840	-0.920455	0.000000		H	-2.583908	0.225631	-0.000106
C	3.645866	-0.156938	0.000001		H	-1.875744	-1.154860	0.879536
C	0.000001	-1.125503	-0.000002					
C	-1.230720	-0.332032	-0.000001					
C	-1.168869	1.062433	-0.000001					
C	-2.319224	1.847409	0.000000					
H	-2.214994	2.923902	0.000000		C	1.987047	0.389079	0.000007
C	-3.550776	1.236576	0.000001		H	1.928544	1.014035	-0.888132
C	-3.645865	-0.156940	0.000000		H	1.928579	1.013974	0.888192
C	-2.504839	-0.920456	-0.000001		H	2.920403	-0.171006	-0.000028
H	4.448012	1.842236	0.000002		S	0.655665	-0.818517	-0.000005
H	2.214992	2.923902	0.000000		C	-0.742295	0.270821	-0.000002
H	2.557402	-2.000815	0.000000		O	-0.636498	1.467270	-0.000005
H	4.616590	-0.634222	0.000001		C	-2.070082	-0.444279	0.000006
H	-4.448013	1.842233	0.000001		H	-2.630591	-0.132366	-0.881916
H	-4.616589	-0.634224	0.000001		H	-2.630594	-0.132333	0.881916
H	-2.557400	-2.000816	-0.000001		H	-1.963014	-1.527924	0.000025
S	0.000001	-2.767303	0.000002					
O	-0.000003	1.740471	-0.000001					



C	-3.773516	-0.625382	0.000001
C	-2.625313	-1.384311	0.000000
C	-1.371188	-0.764804	0.000000
C	-1.281544	0.627762	0.000000
C	-2.464224	1.376174	0.000002
C	-3.696632	0.766258	0.000002
C	0.000000	1.376813	-0.000002
C	1.281544	0.627761	0.000000
C	1.371188	-0.764804	0.000000
C	2.625312	-1.384311	0.000001
H	2.686850	-2.465768	0.000000
C	3.773516	-0.625382	0.000001
C	3.696632	0.766258	0.000001
C	2.464224	1.376174	0.000001
H	-4.737850	-1.117496	0.000000
H	-2.686850	-2.465768	-0.000002
H	-2.370398	2.453764	0.000002
H	-4.599778	1.361932	0.000003
H	4.737850	-1.117496	0.000002
H	4.599778	1.361933	0.000001
H	2.370398	2.453763	0.000000
O	0.000001	2.591943	-0.000003
S	0.000000	-1.838103	-0.000001



C	1.861270	-0.162064	0.000004
H	2.021037	0.451586	-0.886601
H	2.021028	0.451573	0.88662
H	2.538565	-1.011976	0.000002
O	0.547292	-0.712543	-0.000007
C	-0.457514	0.175451	-0.000005
O	-0.287818	1.363748	-0.000001
C	-1.790607	-0.516145	0.000002
H	-1.875670	-1.155053	-0.879398

## 7. References

- 1 N. Pearce, E. S. Davies, R. Horvath, C. R. Pfeiffer, X.-Z. Sun, W. Lewis, J. McMaster, M. W. George and N. R. Champness, *Phys. Chem. Chem. Phys.*, 2018, **20**, 752–764.
- 2 W. Chen, J. Zhang, G. Long, Y. Liu and Q. Zhang, *J. Mater. Chem. C*, 2015, **3**, 8219.
- 3 A. J. Tilley, R. D. Pensack, T. S. Lee, B. Djukic, G. D. Scholes and D. S. Seferos, *J. Phys. Chem. C*, 2014, **118**, 9996–10004.
- 4 F. S. Etheridge, R. Fernando, J. A. Golen, A. L. Rheingold and G. Sauve, *RSC Adv.*, 2015, **5**, 46534–46539.
- 5 S. Le, D. Gendron, N. Be, Ois. Grenier, M. Leclerc and M. Co, *J. Phys. Chem. C*, 2014, **118**, 3953–3959.
- 6 X. Chen, A. A. Sukhanov, Y. Yan, D. Bese, C. Bese, J. Zhao, V. K. Voronkova, A. Barbon and H. G. Yaglioglu, *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.*, 2022, **61**, e202203758.
- 7 K. M. Psutka, J. Ledrew, H. Taing, S. H. Eichhorn and K. E. Maly, *J. Org. Chem.*, 2019, **84**, 10796–10804.
- 8 K. M. Psutka and K. E. Maly, *RSC Adv.*, 2016, **6**, 78784–78790.
- 9 M. Ciureanu, M. Hillebrand, A. Meghea and E. Volanschi, *J. Electroanal. Chem.*, 1988, **239**, 227–237.
- 10 M. F. Nielsen, B. Batanero, T. Löhl, H. J. Schäfer, E. U. Würthwein and R. Fröhlich, *Chem. Eur. J.*, 1997, **3**, 2011–2024.
- 11 J. Voss and R. Edler, *J. Chem. Res.*, 2007, 226–228.
- 12 J. Voss, G. Kupczik and H. Stahncke, *J. Chem. Res.*, 2009, 283–286.
- 13 G. Mabon and J. Simonet, *Tetrahedron Lett.*, 1984, **25**, 193–196.
- 14 J. L. Burgot, A. Darchen and M. Sädi, *Electrochim. Acta*, 2002, **48**, 107–112.
- 15 M. L. Abasq, J. L. Burgot, A. Darchen and S. E. Dervout, *J. Electroanal. Chem.*, 2002, **537**, 145–150.
- 16 W. Schumuser and J. Voss, *J. Chem. Res. (M)*, 1980, 3361–3386.
- 17 M. A. Fox, K. Campbell, G. Maier and L. H. Franz, *J. Org. Chem.*, 1983, **48**, 1762–1765.
- 18 C.-P. Klages and J. Voss, *Chem. Ber.*, 1980, **113**, 2255–2277.
- 19 L. Mattiello and L. Rampazzo, in *Papers presented at the International Symposium on Electroorganic Synthesis*, 1997, pp. 209–210.
- 20 H. J. Timpe and K. P. Kronfeld, *J Photochem. Photobiol. A Chem.*, 1989, **46**, 253–267.
- 21 P.-A. Muller and E. Vauthey, *J. Phys. Chem. A*, 2001, **105**, 5994–6000.
- 22 L. Lunazzi, G. Maccagnani, G. Mazzanti and G. Placucci, *J. Chem. Soc. (B)*, 1971, 162–166.
- 23 R. O. Loutfy and R. O. Loutfy, *J. Phys. Chem.*, 1972, **76**, 1650–1655.
- 24 N. G. Connelly and W. E. Geiger, *Chem. Rev.*, 1996, **96**, 877–910.
- 25 C. M. Cardona, W. Li, A. E. Kaifer, D. Stockdale and G. C. Bazan, *Adv. Mater.*, 2011, **23**, 2367–2371.

- 26 D. Bao, B. Millare, W. Xia, B. G. Steyer, A. A. Gerasimenko, A. Ferreira, A. Contreras and V. I. Vullev, *J. Phys. Chem. A*, 2009, **113**, 1259–1267.
- 27 J. R. Aranzaes, M.-C. Daniel and D. Astruc, *Can. J. Chem.*, 2006, **84**, 288–299.
- 28 R. G. Bates and J. B. Macaskill, *Pure Appl. Chem.*, 1978, **50**, 1701–1706.