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RbZnFe(PO₄)₂: synthesis and crystal structure

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A new iron phosphate, rubidium zinc iron(III) phosphate, RbZnFe(PO₄)₂, has been synthesized as single crystals by the flux method. This compound is isostructural to the previously reported KCoAl(PO₄)₂ [Chen *et al.* (1997). *Acta Cryst.* **C53**,1754–1756]. Its structure consists of a three-dimensional framework built up from corner-sharing PO₄ and (Zn,Fe)O₄ tetrahedra. This mode of linkage forms channels parallel to the [100], [010] and [001] directions in which the Rb⁺ ions are located.

1. Chemical context

Phosphates with open-framework structures, similar to other porous materials such as zeolites, are interesting because of their wide industrial and environmental applications ranging from catalysis to ion-exchange and separation (Gier & Stucky, 1991; Maspoch et al., 2007). Among them, iron phosphates (Redrup & Weller, 2009; Lajmi et al., 2009) are particularly attractive because of their rich crystal chemistry (Moore, 1970; Gleitzer, 1991) and they present interesting and variable physical properties (Elbouaanani et al., 2002; Riou-Cavellec et al., 1999). Among the variety of iron orthophosphates synthesized and characterized over the past three decades, only two rubidium-containing compounds have been reported, namely Rb₉Fe₇(PO₄)₁₀ (Hidouri et al., 2010) and RbCu- $Fe(PO_4)_2$ (Badri et al., 2013). In this paper, we report the structure of a new rubidium iron orthophosphate, $RbZnFe(PO_4)_2$, synthesized during our investigation of the Rb_3PO_4 - $Zn_3(PO_4)_2$ -FePO₄ quasi-system. This compound is isostructural to $KCoAl(PO_4)_2$ (Chen *et al.*, 1997) and KZnFe(PO₄)₂ (Badri et al., 2014).

2. Structural commentary

The structure is made up of a three-dimensional assemblage of MO_4 (M = 0.5Zn + 0.5Fe) and PO_4 tetrahedra through cornersharing. This framework delimits crossing channels along the [100] and [001] directions, in which the Rb⁺ ions are located (Figs. 1 and 2). A projection of the structure along [001] direction reveals that each MO_4 tetrahedron is linked to four PO_4 tetrahedra by sharing corners. In addition, it shows the presence of two kinds of rings through corner-sharing of MO_4 and PO_4 tetrahedra (Fig. 2). The first presents an elliptical form and comprises four MO_4 and four PO_4 tetrahedra, the second consists of two MO_4 and two PO_4 tetrahedra and has a quasi-rectangular form. From an examination of the interatomic distances (cation–oxygen), the M(1) and M(2) sites exhibit similar regular tetrahedral environments, as seen in the cation–oxygen distances which vary from 1.877 (5) to



Figure 1

A view of the crystal structure of RbZnFe(PO₄)₂ along [100]. Colour key: $M(1)O_4$ tetrahedra are purple, $M(2)O_4$ tetrahedra are red, $P(1)O_4$ tetrahedra are dark grey, $P(2)O_4$ tetrahedra are light grey and Rb⁺ cations are yellow spheres.

1.900 (5) Å for M(1) and from 1.860 (6) to 1.919 (5) Å for M(2). The average distances of 1.885 (2) and 1.888 (2) Å are between the values of 1.926 (2) Å observed for tetrahedrally coordinated Zn²⁺ ions in the zinc phosphate RbZnPO₄ (Elammari & Elouadi, 1991) and 1.865 Å reported for the Fe³⁺ ions with the same coordination in the iron phosphate in FePO₄ (Long *et al.*, 1983). The P–O distances within the PO₄ tetrahedra are between 1.514 (5) and 1.535 (5) Å and with mean distances of 1.523 (9) Å for P(1) and 1.520 (3) Å for P(2), consistent with the value of 1.537 Å calculated by Baur (1974) for orthophosphate groups.

The Rb⁺ ions occupy a single site at the intersection of the crossing tunnels. Their environment was determined assuming all cation–oxygen distances to be shorter than the shortest distance between Rb⁺ and its nearest cation. This environment (Fig. 3) then consists of ten O atoms with Rb–O distances ranging from 2.925 (6) to 3.298 (7) Å.

3. Synthesis and crystallization

Single crystals of RbZnFe(PO₄)₂ were grown in a flux of rubidium dimolybdate Rb₂Mo₂O₇, in an atomic ratio P:Mo = 4:1. Appropriate amounts of Rb₂CO₃, Zn(NO₃)₂·6H₂O, Fe(NO₃)₃·9H₂O, (NH₄)₂HPO₄ and MoO₃ were used. All of the chemicals were analytically pure from commercial sources and used without further purification. The reagents were weighted in the atomic ratio P:Mo = 2:1 and dissolved in nitric acid and then dried for 24 h at 353 K. The dry residue was gradually heated to 873 K in a platinum crucible to remove the decomposition products. In a second step, the mixture was





A view of the crystal structure of RbZnFe(PO₄)₂ along [001], showing the elliptical and quasi-rectangular forms of corner-sharing MO_4 and PO₄ tetrahedra (edge with green colour). The colour key is as in Fig. 1.

ground, melted for 1 h at 1173 K and subsequently cooled at a rate of 10 K h⁻¹ to 773 K, after which the furnace was turned off. The crystals obtained by washing the final product with warm water in order to dissolve the flux are essentially comprised of beige hexagonally shaped crystals of RbZnFe(PO₄)₂.

4. Refinement

Crystal data, data collection and structure refinement details are summarized in Table 1. The application of direct methods



Figure 3

The environment of the Rb cations, showing displacement ellipsoids drawn at the 50% probability level. <u>Authors: Define symmetry operators</u> (in the Figure) and codes (in the caption)

research communications

Table 1Experimental details.

Crystal data	
Chemical formula	$RbZnFe(PO_4)_2$
M _r	396.63
Crystal system, space group	Monoclinic, C2/c
Temperature (K)	293
a, b, c (Å)	13.601 (4), 13.304 (5), 8.978 (9)
β (°)	100.76 (5)
$V(Å^3)$	1596.0 (18)
Z	8
Radiation type	Μο Κα
$\mu (\mathrm{mm}^{-1})^{31}$	11.29
Crystal size (mm)	$0.43 \times 0.25 \times 0.18$
Data collection	
Diffractometer	Enraf–Nonius TurboCAD-4
Absorption correction	Part of the refinement model (ΔF)
1	(Walker & Stuart 1983)
Tmin. Tmax	0.054, 0.070
No. of measured, independent and	1409, 1409, 1227
observed $[I > 2\sigma(I)]$ reflections	,,
R_{i-4}	0.089
$(\sin \theta / \lambda)$ $(Å^{-1})$	0.594
(Shi onomax (Pr	0.571
Refinement	
$R[F^2 > 2\sigma(F^2)] wR(F^2) S$	0.036 0.110 1.05
No of reflections	1409
No. of parameters	118
No. of parameters	$w = 1/[\sigma^2(F^2) + (0.0565P)^2 +$
	$w = 1/[0] (P_0) + (0.05051) + 1$ 31 2735P] where $P = (E^2 + 1)$
	$2F^2)/3$
$\Lambda_0 \Lambda_0 (e \stackrel{\circ}{A}^{-3})$	0.85 - 0.76
$\Delta \rho_{\rm max}, \Delta \rho_{\rm min} (c \Lambda)$	0.05, -0.70

Computer programs: CAD-4 EXPRESS (Enraf-Nonius, 1994), XCAD4 (Harms & Wocadlo, 1995), SIR92 (Altomare et al., 1993), SHELXL2014 (Sheldrick, 2015), DIAMOND (Brandenburg, 1999) and WinGX (Farrugia, 2012).

revealed the Rb atoms and located two sites, labelled M(1) and M(2), statistically occupied by the Fe³⁺ and Zn²⁺ ions. This distribution was supported by the M(1)-O and M(2)-O distances which are between the classical pure Zn-O and Fe-O values. Succeeding difference Fourier syntheses led to the positions of all the remaining atoms.

Despite several synthesis attempts, all the obtained crystals of $RbZnFe(PO_4)_2$ were of poor quality, resulting in the large

discrepancies found in a number of reflections; hence in this study the refinement was performed using a filter of the reflections by $[\sin(\theta)/\lambda]$. The four reflections ($\overline{685}$, $\overline{934}$, $\overline{885}$ and $\overline{375}$) were omitted as the difference between the observed and calculated structure factors was larger than 10σ .

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RbZnFe(**PO**₄)₂: synthesis and crystal structure

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Computing details

Cell refinement: *CAD-4 EXPRESS* (Enraf–Nonius, 1994); data reduction: *XCAD4* (Harms & Wocadlo, 1995); program(s) used to solve structure: *SIR92* (Altomare *et al.*, 1993); program(s) used to refine structure: *SHELXL2014* (Sheldrick, 2015); molecular graphics: *DIAMOND* (Brandenburg, 1999); software used to prepare material for publication: *WinGX* (Farrugia, 2012).

Rubidium zinc Iron(III) phosphate

Crystal data

RbZnFe(PO₄)₂ $M_r = 396.63$ Monoclinic, C2/c a = 13.601 (4) Å b = 13.304 (5) Å c = 8.978 (9) Å $\beta = 100.76$ (5)° V = 1596.0 (18) Å³ Z = 8

Data collection

Enraf–Nonius TurboCAD-4	
diffractometer	
Radiation source: fine-focus sealed tube	
non–profiled $\omega/2\tau$ scans	
Absorption correction: part of the refinement	
model (ΔF)	
(Walker & Stuart 1983)	
$T_{\min} = 0.054, \ T_{\max} = 0.070$	
1409 measured reflections	

Refinement

Refinement on F^2 Least-squares matrix: full $R[F^2 > 2\sigma(F^2)] = 0.036$ $wR(F^2) = 0.110$ S = 1.051409 reflections 118 parameters F(000) = 1496 $D_x = 3.301 \text{ Mg m}^{-3}$ Mo K α radiation, $\lambda = 0.71073 \text{ Å}$ Cell parameters from 25 reflections $\theta = 8.1-11.1^{\circ}$ $\mu = 11.29 \text{ mm}^{-1}$ T = 293 KPrism, brown $0.43 \times 0.25 \times 0.18 \text{ mm}$

1409 independent reflections 1227 reflections with $I > 2\sigma(I)$ $R_{int} = 0.089$ $\theta_{max} = 25.0^{\circ}, \theta_{min} = 2.2^{\circ}$ $h = -16 \rightarrow 15$ $k = 0 \rightarrow 15$ $l = 0 \rightarrow 10$ 2 standard reflections every 120 min intensity decay: 1%

0 restraints $w = 1/[\sigma^2(F_o^2) + (0.0565P)^2 + 31.2735P]$ where $P = (F_o^2 + 2F_c^2)/3$ $(\Delta/\sigma)_{max} < 0.001$ $\Delta\rho_{max} = 0.85$ e Å⁻³ $\Delta\rho_{min} = -0.76$ e Å⁻³

Special details

Geometry. All esds (except the esd in the dihedral angle between two l.s. planes) are estimated using the full covariance matrix. The cell esds are taken into account individually in the estimation of esds in distances, angles and torsion angles; correlations between esds in cell parameters are only used when they are defined by crystal symmetry. An approximate (isotropic) treatment of cell esds is used for estimating esds involving l.s. planes.

	x	У	Z	$U_{ m iso}$ */ $U_{ m eq}$	Occ. (<1)
Rb	0.18260 (6)	0.24668 (6)	0.22827 (9)	0.0316 (3)	
Zn1	0.87122 (6)	0.55912 (6)	0.11383 (9)	0.0169 (3)	0.5
Fe1	0.87122 (6)	0.55912 (6)	0.11383 (9)	0.0169 (3)	0.5
Zn2	0.92406 (6)	0.12098 (6)	-0.05652 (9)	0.0166 (3)	0.5
Fe2	0.92406 (6)	0.12098 (6)	-0.05652 (9)	0.0166 (3)	0.5
P1	0.14761 (12)	0.06205 (13)	-0.08572 (19)	0.0166 (4)	
O11	0.1420 (4)	-0.0526 (4)	-0.0852 (6)	0.0295 (12)	
O12	0.2450 (3)	0.1026 (4)	0.0096 (6)	0.0243 (11)	
O13	0.3570 (5)	0.3996 (5)	0.2456 (6)	0.0397 (15)	
O14	0.0638 (4)	0.1055 (5)	-0.0151 (7)	0.0385 (14)	
P2	0.92645 (12)	0.36174 (12)	-0.03358 (18)	0.0144 (4)	
O21	0.8903 (5)	0.2550 (4)	-0.0146 (7)	0.0323 (13)	
O22	0.0389 (4)	0.3613 (4)	-0.0253 (6)	0.0269 (11)	
O23	0.3731 (4)	0.0942 (5)	0.3168 (6)	0.0367 (14)	
O24	0.8990 (4)	0.4217 (4)	0.0972 (6)	0.0252 (11)	

Fractional atomic coordinates and isotropic or equivalent isotropic displacement parameters (\mathring{A}^2)

Atomic displacement parameters $(Å^2)$

	U^{11}	U^{22}	U^{33}	U^{12}	U^{13}	U^{23}
Rb	0.0383 (5)	0.0321 (5)	0.0259 (4)	0.0006 (3)	0.0097 (3)	-0.0044 (3)
Znl	0.0197 (4)	0.0151 (5)	0.0149 (4)	0.0019 (3)	0.0006 (3)	-0.0023 (3)
Fe1	0.0197 (4)	0.0151 (5)	0.0149 (4)	0.0019 (3)	0.0006 (3)	-0.0023 (3)
Zn2	0.0194 (5)	0.0149 (5)	0.0149 (4)	-0.0013 (3)	0.0021 (3)	-0.0026 (3)
Fe2	0.0194 (5)	0.0149 (5)	0.0149 (4)	-0.0013 (3)	0.0021 (3)	-0.0026 (3)
P1	0.0191 (8)	0.0138 (8)	0.0156 (8)	-0.0026 (7)	-0.0004 (6)	0.0035 (6)
011	0.043 (3)	0.014 (3)	0.033 (3)	-0.003 (2)	0.013 (2)	0.003 (2)
O12	0.019 (2)	0.023 (3)	0.028 (3)	-0.0014 (19)	-0.003 (2)	-0.003 (2)
013	0.059 (4)	0.043 (3)	0.015 (3)	-0.011 (3)	0.002 (3)	0.011 (2)
O14	0.021 (3)	0.042 (3)	0.052 (4)	0.000 (2)	0.007 (3)	-0.017 (3)
P2	0.0211 (9)	0.0095 (8)	0.0127 (8)	-0.0020 (6)	0.0031 (6)	0.0001 (6)
O21	0.053 (4)	0.016 (3)	0.034 (3)	-0.010 (2)	0.024 (3)	-0.010 (2)
O22	0.023 (3)	0.023 (3)	0.037 (3)	0.000 (2)	0.010 (2)	0.006 (2)
O23	0.037 (3)	0.056 (4)	0.016 (3)	-0.006 (3)	0.004 (2)	-0.011 (2)
O24	0.040 (3)	0.014 (2)	0.023 (3)	0.005 (2)	0.009 (2)	-0.0051 (19)

Geometric parameters (Å, °)

Rb—O21 ⁱ	2.925 (6)	Zn1—O22 ^{vi}	1.900 (5)
Rb—O12	2.979 (5)	Zn2—O13 ^{vii}	1.860 (6)

supporting information

$Ph \cap 14$	2 008 (6)	7n2 014viii	1 979 (5)
Rb 013	3.098 (0)	2n2 - 014	1.070(5)
Rb 022	3.107 (0)	$Z_{112} = 021$	1.097(3)
	3.109(3)		1.919(3)
RD	5.125 (5) 2.181 (5)	PI-013	1.514 (5)
	3.181 (5)	PI-014	1.519 (6)
Rb—012 ^m	3.215 (6)	PI-OII	1.527 (5)
Rb—023	3.269 (6)	P1—012	1.535 (5)
Rb—O21 ^w	3.298 (7)	P2—O22 ^{vm}	1.517 (5)
$Zn1 - O23^{v}$	1.877 (5)	P2—O23 ^{vn}	1.520 (5)
Zn1—O24	1.879 (5)	P2—O24	1.523 (5)
Zn1—012 ^v	1.886 (5)	P2—O21	1.522 (5)
O21 ⁱ —Rb—O12	142.06 (14)	O12 ⁱⁱⁱ —Rb—O23	102.79 (14)
O21 ⁱ —Rb—O14	115.16 (17)	$O21^{i}$ —Rb— $O21^{iv}$	76.81 (19)
O12—Rb—O14	47.17 (13)	O12—Rb—O21 ^{iv}	98.31 (14)
O21 ⁱ —Rb—O13	108.19 (16)	O14—Rb—O21 ^{iv}	139.07 (14)
O12—Rb—O13	98.37 (15)	O13—Rb—O21 ^{iv}	54.77 (14)
O14—Rb—O13	136.49 (16)	O22—Rb—O21 ^{iv}	148.78 (13)
O21 ⁱ —Rb—O22	110.80 (16)	$O24^{i}$ —Rb— $O21^{iv}$	89.55 (14)
O12—Rb—O22	92.90 (15)	$O11^{ii}$ —Rb— $O21^{iv}$	80.58 (14)
O14—Rb—O22	66.86 (16)	O12 ⁱⁱⁱ —Rb—O21 ^{iv}	98.09 (13)
O13—Rb—O22	94.89 (14)	O23—Rb—O21 ^{iv}	44.69 (13)
$O21^{i}$ —Rb— $O24^{i}$	47.19 (13)	O23 ^v —Zn1—O24	110.7 (3)
O12—Rb—O24 ⁱ	169.12 (13)	O23 ^v —Zn1—O12 ^v	104.6 (2)
O14—Rb—O24 ⁱ	128.20 (14)	O24—Zn1—O12 ^v	115.9 (2)
O13—Rb—O24 ⁱ	79.99 (16)	O23 ^v —Zn1—O22 ^{vi}	112.0 (3)
O22—Rb—O24 ⁱ	76.59 (15)	O24—Zn1—O22 ^{vi}	110.8 (2)
O21 ⁱ —Rb—O11 ⁱⁱ	56.47 (13)	$O12^{v}$ —Zn1— $O22^{vi}$	102.6 (2)
O12—Rb—O11 ⁱⁱ	85.60 (14)	O13 ^{vii} —Zn2—O14 ^{viii}	118.1 (3)
O14—Rb—O11 ⁱⁱ	76.11 (17)	O13 ^{vii} —Zn2—O21	103.5 (3)
O13—Rb—O11 ⁱⁱ	135.33 (15)	O14 ^{viii} —Zn2—O21	109.7 (3)
O22—Rb—O11 ⁱⁱ	129.51 (14)	O13 ^{vii} —Zn2—O11 ^{ix}	110.9 (3)
O24 ⁱ —Rb—O11 ⁱⁱ	103.19 (13)	$O14^{viii}$ —Zn2— $O11^{ix}$	113.5 (3)
O21 ⁱ —Rb—O12 ⁱⁱⁱ	139.13 (14)	O21—Zn2—O11 ^{ix}	98.8 (2)
O12—Rb—O12 ⁱⁱⁱ	78.67 (16)	O13 ⁱⁱⁱ —P1—O14	111.5 (4)
O14—Rb—O12 ⁱⁱⁱ	95.38 (16)	O13 ⁱⁱⁱ —P1—O11	110.3 (3)
O13—Rb—O12 ⁱⁱⁱ	45.51 (13)	O14—P1—O11	109.7 (3)
O22—Rb—O12 ⁱⁱⁱ	55.68 (13)	O13 ⁱⁱⁱ —P1—O12	106.8 (3)
O24 ⁱ —Rb—O12 ⁱⁱⁱ	92.85 (14)	O14—P1—O12	105.7 (3)
O11 ⁱⁱ —Rb—O12 ⁱⁱⁱ	163.87 (13)	O11—P1—O12	112.8 (3)
O21 ⁱ —Rb—O23	101.14 (15)	O22 ^{viii} —P2—O23 ^{vii}	110.8 (3)
O12—Rb—O23	56.67 (14)	O22 ^{viii} —P2—O24	110.8 (3)
O14—Rb—O23	94.63 (15)	O23 ^{vii} —P2—O24	109.5 (3)
O13—Rb—O23	80.27 (17)	O22 ^{viii} —P2—O21	109.5 (3)
O22—Rb—O23	147.51 (14)	O23 ^{vii} —P2—O21	110.3 (3)

supporting information

O24 ⁱ —Rb—O23	132.85 (14)	O24—P2—O21	105.7 (3)
O11 ⁱⁱ —Rb—O23	64.93 (15)		

Symmetry codes: (i) -*x*+1, *y*, -*z*+1/2; (ii) *x*, -*y*, *z*+1/2; (iii) -*x*+1/2, -*y*+1/2, -*z*; (iv) *x*-1/2, -*y*+1/2, *z*+1/2; (v) *x*+1/2, *y*+1/2, *z*; (vi) -*x*+1, -*y*+1, -*z*; (vii) *x*+1/2, -*y*+1/2, *z*-1/2; (viii) *x*+1, *y*, *z*; (ix) -*x*+1, -*y*, -*z*.