

## **Supporting Information**

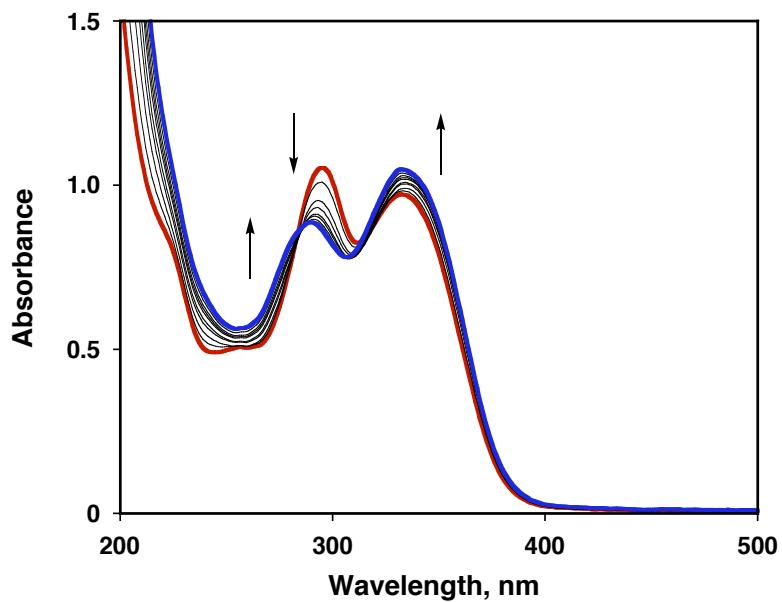
### **An OFF-OFF-ON Fluorescence Sensor for Metal Ions in Stepwise Complex Formation of 2,3,5,6-Tetrakis(2-pyridyl)pyrazine (TPPZ) with Metal Ions**

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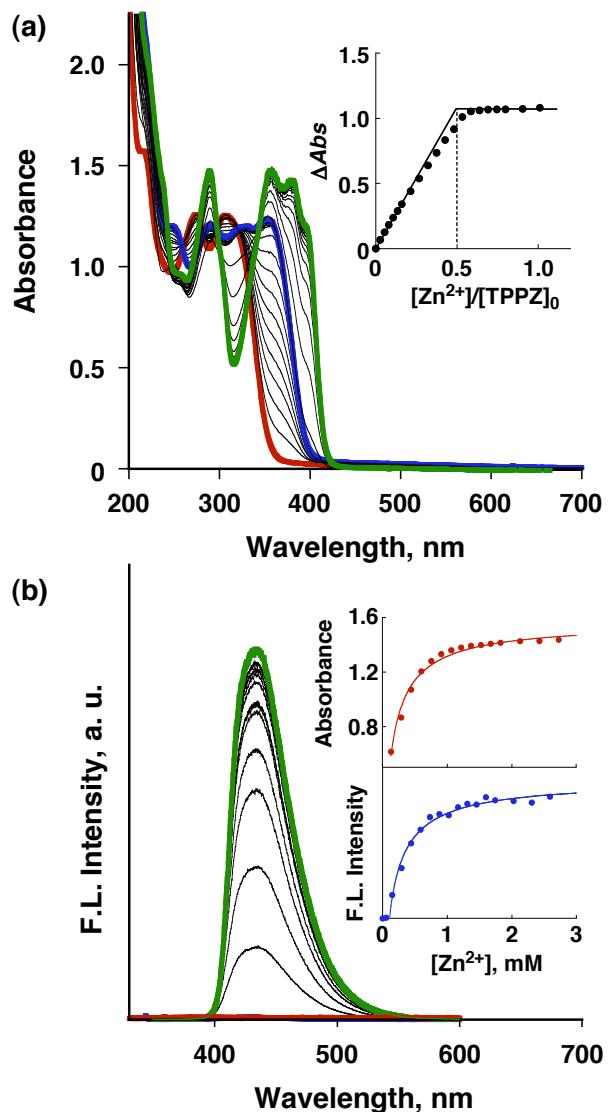
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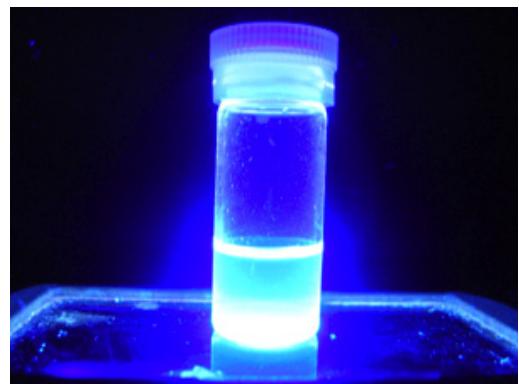
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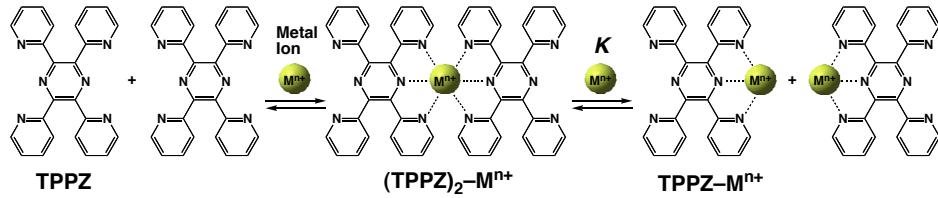
**Figure S1.** UV-vis absorption spectra of TPPZ ( $3.0 \times 10^{-5}$  M) in the presence of  $\text{Sc}^{3+}$  [ $8.0 \times 10^{-4}$  M –  $1.6 \times 10^{-2}$  M] in MeCN at 298 K.



**Figure S2.** (a) UV-vis absorption and (b) fluorescence spectra of TPPZ ( $5.7 \times 10^{-5}$  M) in the presence of  $Zn^{2+}$  [0 M (red line) –  $3.0 \times 10^{-5}$  M (blue line) –  $3.1 \times 10^{-3}$  M (green line)] in MeCN at 298 K. The excitation wavelength was  $\lambda = 343$  nm. Insets: (a) Plot of  $\Delta Abs$  vs  $[Zn^{2+}]/[TPPZ]_0$  at  $\lambda = 355$  nm; (b) plots of absorbance at  $\lambda = 381$  nm (●) and fluorescence intensity at  $\lambda = 432$  nm (○) vs  $[Zn^{2+}]$ .



**Figure S3.** Photograph of a H<sub>2</sub>O solutions of TPPZ ( $2.0 \times 10^{-4}$  M) in the presence of Zn<sup>2+</sup> ( $5.0 \times 10^{-2}$  M) under UV-light irradiation.



The formation constant ( $K$ ) of  $TPPZ-M^{n+}$  is expressed by eq 1 at concentrations of metal ions ( $M^{n+}$ ) above the 1:2 ratio of metal ion concentration to the initial concentration of TPPZ ( $[M^{n+}]/[TPPZ]_0 > 0.5$ ).

$$K = \frac{[TPPZ-M^{n+}]^2}{([TPPZ]_0/2 - [TPPZ-M^{n+}]/2) \times ([M^{n+}] - [TPPZ]_0/2 - [TPPZ-M^{n+}]/2)} \quad (1)$$

Eq 2 is derived from eq 1.

$$(4 - K)[TPPZ-M^{n+}]^2 + 2K[M^{n+}][TPPZ-M^{n+}] - K[TPPZ]_0(2[M^{n+}] - [TPPZ]_0) = 0 \quad (2)$$

The concentration of  $TPPZ-M^{n+}$  ( $[TPPZ-M^{n+}]$ ) is therefore expressed by eq 3.

$$[TPPZ-Mn^{+}] = \frac{-K[M^{n+}] + \sqrt{K^2[M^{n+}]^2 + (4 - K)K[TPPZ]_0(2[M^{n+}] - [TPPZ]_0)}}{4 - K} \quad (3)$$

Then, absorbance and fluorescence intensity changes due to the  $TPPZ-M^{n+}$  complex formation is expressed by eq 4, where  $A_0$  and  $A_\infty$  are absorbance due to  $(TPPZ)_2-M^{n+}$  and  $TPPZ-M^{n+}$ , respectively.

$$\frac{(A - A_0)}{(or I)} = \frac{(A_\infty - A_0) \times \frac{-K[M^{n+}] + \sqrt{K^2[M^{n+}]^2 + (4 - K)K[TPPZ]_0(2[M^{n+}] - [TPPZ]_0)}}{4 - K}}{(or I_\infty)} \quad (4)$$