

Supplementary Materials

Structural Chemistry of Akdalaite, $\text{Al}_{10}\text{O}_{14}(\text{OH})_2$, the Isostructural Aluminum Analogue of Ferrihydrite

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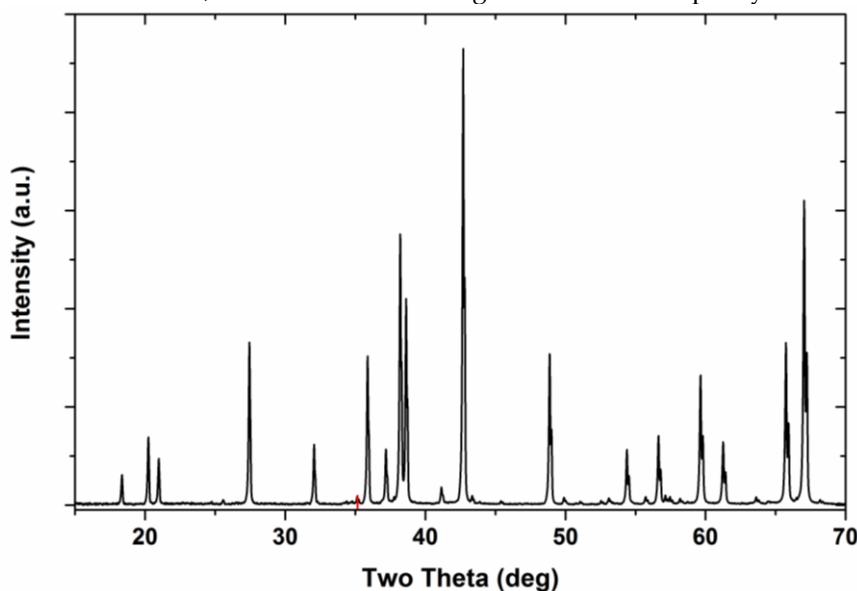
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1. Initial Characterization

The synthesized akdalaite samples were first inspected with laboratory PXRD and the crystal morphology was investigated with SEM. Akdalaite synthesized using the Al-floc starting material was nearly pure akdalaite with minor corundum impurity but had a needle morphology (Figure 4). The akdalaite synthesized from nanocrystalline boehmite also had a minor corundum impurity but had a hexagonal plate morphology suitable for SC-XRD (Figure 5). The 1-g sample synthesized from boehmite for NPD utilized a much longer capsule (5.5 cm) and was likely subject to a higher thermal gradient in the cold-seal vessel, which resulted in a higher amount of impurity corundum (Figure 6).



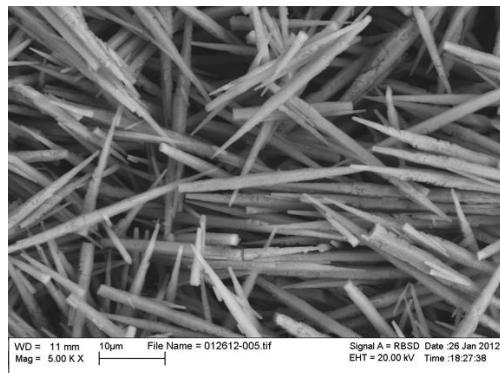


Figure S1. The PXRD pattern (top) and SEM image (bottom) of akdalaite synthesized from Al-floc showing only a minor impurity of corundum (red tick).

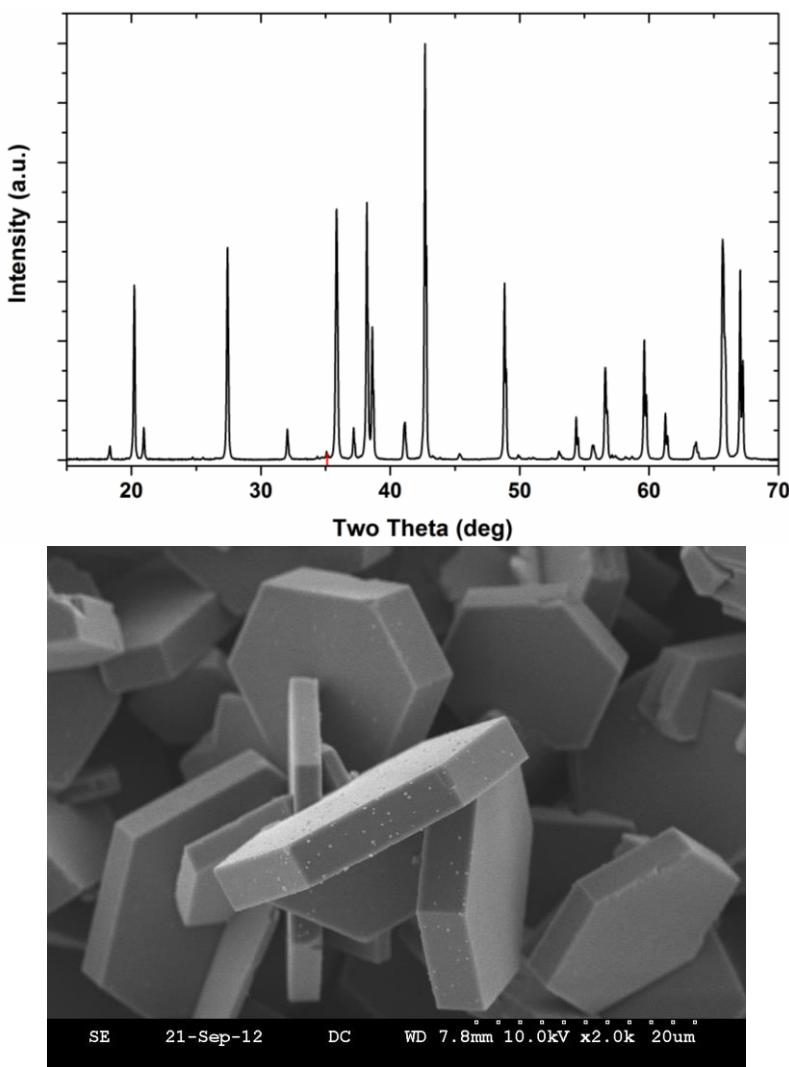


Figure S2. The PXRD pattern (top) and SEM image (bottom) of akdalaite synthesized from boehmite in a 2-cm-long capsule showing only a minor impurity of corundum (red tick).

2. Solid State NMR of Natural and Synthetic Akdalaite

For the synthetic sample, the tetrahedral Al gives a signal from +65 to +35 ppm, broadened by second-order quadrupolar effects (Figure S4).

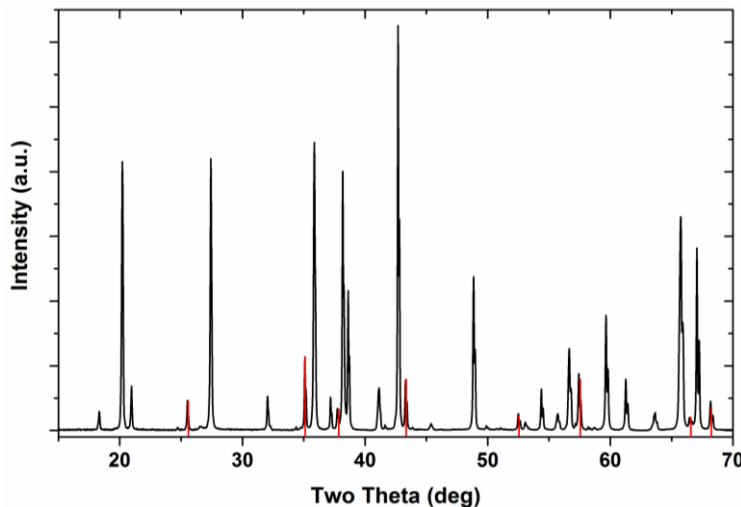


Figure S3. The XRD pattern of akdalaite synthesized from boehmite in a 5.5-cm-long capsule showing corundum (red tick) present as a minor phase.

The six-coordinate Al yields a complex feature from +20 to -10 ppm. The resonances in the synthetic spectrum display sharp features owing to the high crystallinity and purity of the sample, while the spectrum of the natural sample contains signal in the same shift regions but is less resolved due to contributions from paramagnetic impurity elements in akdalaite as well as the other accessory phases that comprise the sample (σ -Al₂O₃, fluorite, and mica). Additional minor, narrow peaks for four-coordinate Al occur in the spectrum of the synthetic sample at +72 and +67 ppm that likely arise from impurities but which cannot be assigned to any known phase based on literature data.

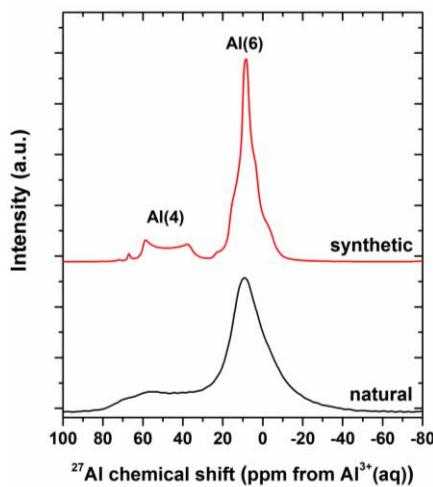


Figure S4. ^{27}Al MAS NMR spectra of synthetic crystalline akdalaite and natural akdalaite

3. High-Energy Powder X-ray Total Scattering

High-energy X-ray total scattering data were collected at the 11-ID-B beamline at the APS using ~20 mg of synthetic akdalaite in a Kapton capillary. The 2D diffraction data were collected at 58.26 keV ($\lambda = 0.2128 \text{ \AA}$) using a Perkin-Elmer XRD 1621 detector. The geometry of the experimental setup was calibrated with a CeO₂ standard (NIST 674a) and the data were integrated into a 1D pattern using the program Fit2D.[1] The total scattering function ($S(Q)$) and pair distribution function (PDF, $G(r)$) were obtained using a Q_{\max} of 25 \AA^{-1} with the program PDFgetX2 with standard and area detector geometry corrections [2,3].

3.1 X-ray Total Scattering and Pair Distribution Function Analysis

Crystalline akdalaite was studied with X-ray total scattering so as to compare the real space PDF to that of 6-line ferrihydrite (6-nm diameter particles) and evaluate the structural relationship between the two compounds. The PDF of two isostructural compounds cannot be compared directly, as the difference in the metal–oxygen (M–O) distances will propagate through the PDF, increasing the off-set of related pairs with distance. The differences in M–O distance can be accounted for in an empirical manner by comparing the PDFs of known crystalline structural analogues. Corundum (Al_2O_3) and hematite (Fe_2O_3) were chosen to determine the shift in pair correlations between aluminum and ferric iron, as the structure has a mix of edge, corner, and face sharing octahedra. There is no ideal Al and Fe analogue that has both octahedral and tetrahedral coordination with only +3 metal oxidation states. The PDFs for corundum and hematite were calculated from structure files using the program PDFgui with a Q_{\max} of 25 \AA^{-1} [4–6]. The overlaid PDFs of corundum and hematite are shown in Figure 15. While being structurally analogous, the intensity of the related peaks in the PDFs are very different, as the intensity is still a function of the scattering power of the atoms. From the PDFs, the r-shift ($\text{Fe}-\text{Al} \Delta r$) for identical peaks is plotted as a function of average distance of those peaks in r (Figure 16). There is a strong linear correlation between the amount of r-shift between equivalent peaks and distance, so the equation of the trend line in Figure 16 becomes the r-shift equation (Equation S1) to apply to Al compound PDFs to equate to Fe compounds. The new distance (r_n) is determined after applying the trendline equation as a function of original distance (r_o):

$$r_n = r_o + [(0.0561 * r_o) + 0.0157]. \quad (\text{S1})$$

The PDF of corundum was shifted using Equation S1 and is shown with the PDF of hematite in Figure 17. It now becomes clear that corundum and hematite are isostructural, as the peaks in the PDF now overlay each other. The peak position alignment is not perfect after applying the r-shift to corundum, as it is an empirical correction but nonetheless a powerful approach for comparing structurally analogous compounds.

At a first glance, the PDF patterns of crystalline akdalaite and 6-line (6 nm) ferrihydrite (data from [7]) appear to have nothing in common (Figure 18, top). However, after the akdalaite data are shifted using the empirical Al–Fe r-shift equation (Equation S1) derived from the corundum–hematite data, the peaks in both datasets align (Figure 18, middle). The patterns are easiest to compare when they represent the same size regime as well. The akdalaite data was additionally enveloped to mimic the data of spherical nanoparticles with a diameter (d) of 30 \AA using the envelope function (f_e) of Equation S2, which is multiplied to the akdalaite $G(r)$ [8]. The $\Theta(d - r)$ term is a step function that eliminates distances outside the diameter of the particle, as it is 1 when $r < d$, and 0 otherwise:

$$f_e(r, d) = \left[1 - \frac{3}{2} \frac{r}{d} + \frac{1}{2} \left(\frac{r}{d} \right)^3 \right] \Theta(d - r). \quad (\text{S2})$$

In comparing the akdalaite data that has been linearly shifted and enveloped to a comparable particle size of ferrihydrite (Figure 18), it becomes obvious that the PDF patterns are extremely similar and share a common structure. These similarities between the adjusted akdalaite and 6-line ferrihydrite PDFs provide new evidence that ferrihydrite and akdalaite are indeed isostructural.

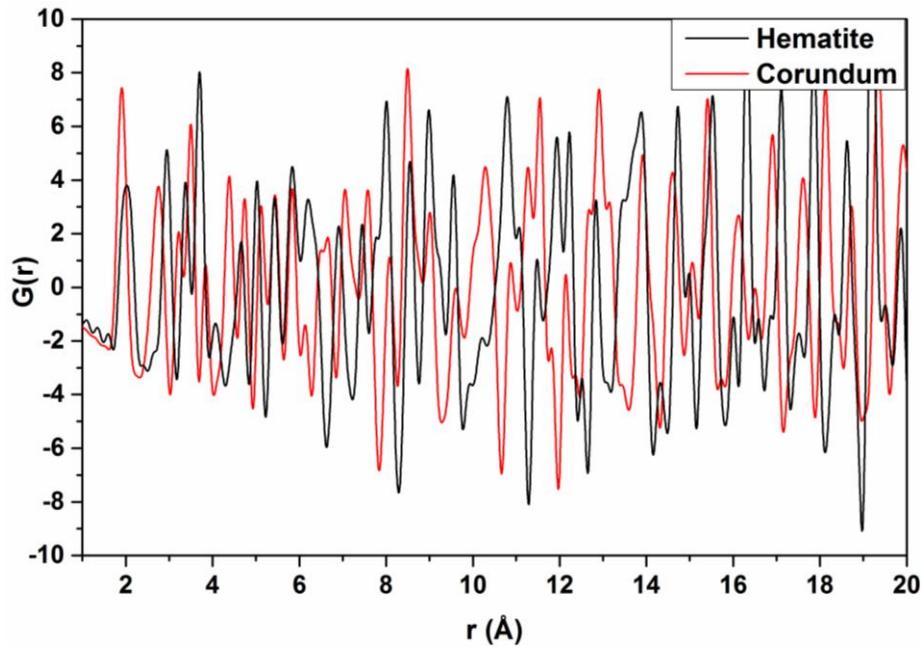


Figure S5. Calculated pair distribution functions (PDFs) of hematite and corundum.

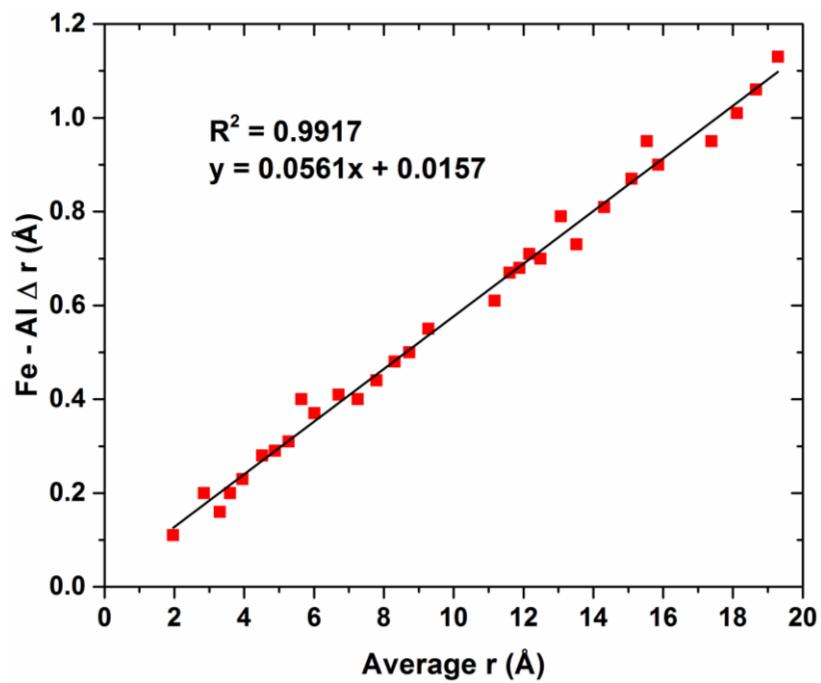


Figure S6. Plot of the r -shift of identical peaks in the calculated PDFs of hematite and corundum.

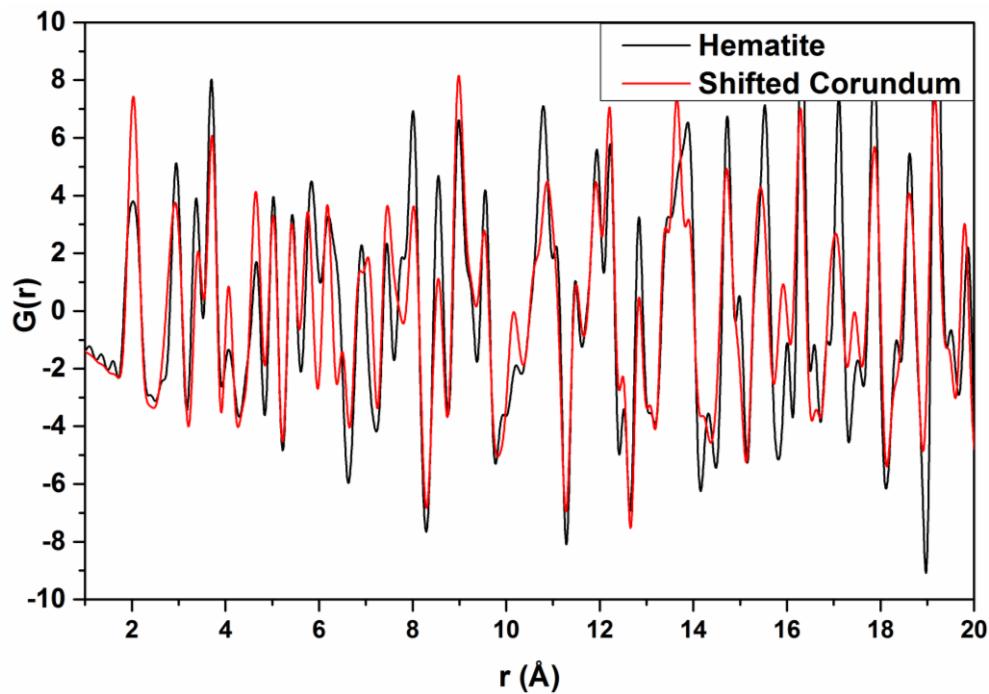
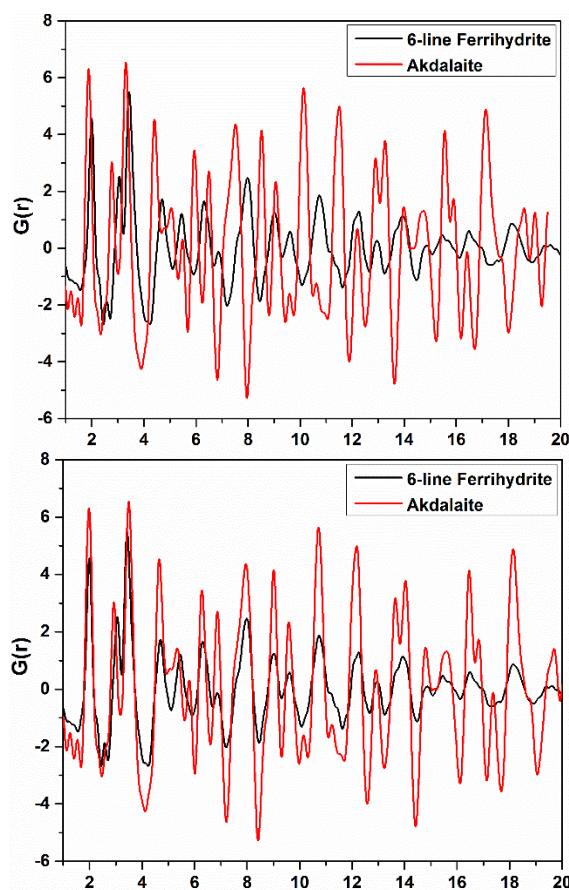


Figure S7. Calculated PDFs of hematite and corundum after the corundum data has been shifted to account for the different M–O differences with the fitted linear r-shift equation (Equation S1).



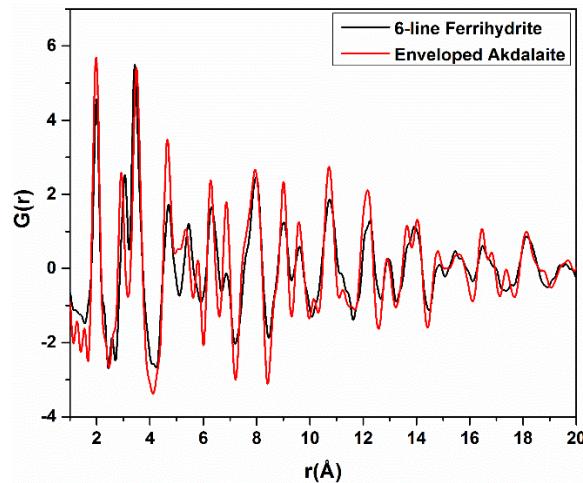


Figure S8. (top) Comparison of X-ray PDF data from crystalline akdalaite and 6-line ferrihydrite. (middle) X-ray PDF data from 6-line ferrihydrite and r -shifted akdalaite which has been adjusted to have approximately equivalent M–O distances as Fe–O. (bottom) Same shifted data as middle but the akdalaite data has had a spherical envelope function applied so intensities are representative of a 3-nm spherical particle.

4. CIFs

4.1 Akdalaite Single Crystal X-ray Diffraction

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3. TITLE AND AUTHOR LIST

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4. TEXT

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Palatinus, L. & Chapuis, G. (2007). *J. Appl. Cryst.* **40**, 786–790.

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_computing_data_collection
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_computing_cell_refinement
'CrysAlisPro 1.171.38.46 (Rigaku OD, 2015)'

_computing_data_reduction
'CrysAlisPro 1.171.38.46 (Rigaku OD, 2015)'

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_restr_distance_site_symmetry_1
_restr_distance_atom_site_label_2
_restr_distance_site_symmetry_2
_restr_distance_target
_restr_distance_target_weight_param
O1 . H1 . 0.9655 0.001

```

```
#=====
```

9. ATOMIC COORDINATES AND DISPLACEMENT PARAMETERS

```

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_atom_site_type_symbol
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_atom_site_fract_y
_atom_site_fract_z
_atom_site_adp_type
_atom_site_U_iso_or_equiv
_atom_site_site_symmetry_multiplicity
_atom_site_occupancy
_atom_site_calc_flag
_atom_site_refinement_flags
_atom_site_disorder_assembly
_atom_site_disorder_group
Al1 Al 0.83432(3) 0.66864(6) 0.9775(4) Uani 0.00193(10) 6 1 d ...
Al2 Al 0.333333 0.666667 0.7698(4) Uani 0.00164(14) 2 1 d ...
Al3 Al 0.333333 0.666667 0.1604(4) Uani 0.00163(13) 2 1 d ...
O1 O 0 0 0.0971(4) Uani 0.0018(2) 2 1 d ...
O2 O 0.97188(14) 0.48594(7) 0.1129(4) Uani 0.00198(17) 6 1 d ...
O3 O 0.16594(9) 0.83406(9) 0.8739(4) Uani 0.0019(2) 6 1 d ...
O4 O 0.666667 0.333333 0.8667(4) Uani 0.0015(3) 2 1 d ...
H1 H 0 0 0.2062(5) Uiso 0.0021 2 1 d ...

```

```

loop_
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_atom_site_aniso_type_symbol
_atom_site_aniso_U_11
_atom_site_aniso_U_22
_atom_site_aniso_U_33
_atom_site_aniso_U_12
_atom_site_aniso_U_13
_atom_site_aniso_U_23
Al1 Al 0.00195(11) 0.00160(13) 0.00213(16) 0.00080(6) 0.00015(5) 0.00030(10)
Al2 Al 0.00170(15) 0.00170(15) 0.0015(3) 0.00085(8) 0 0
Al3 Al 0.00154(15) 0.00154(15) 0.0018(3) 0.00077(7) 0 0
O1 O 0.0022(3) 0.0022(3) 0.0009(5) 0.00110(14) 0 0
O2 O 0.0017(2) 0.00199(19) 0.0022(3) 0.00084(12) -0.0004(2) -0.00018(11)
O3 O 0.0014(3) 0.0014(3) 0.0024(3) 0.0003(3) 0.00050(9) -0.00050(9)
O4 O 0.0019(3) 0.0019(3) 0.0007(5) 0.00095(17) 0 0

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4.1 Akdalaite Powder Neutron Diffraction

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_publ_requested_journal   Crystals
_publ_contact_author_name 'Dr. John B. Parise'
_publ_contact_author_email john.parise@stonybrook.edu
_publ_contact_author_phone '(631) 632-8196'
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'Xia, Bingying' "
'Simonson, Jack W.' "
'Woerner, William R.' "
'Plonka, Anna M.' "
'Phillips, Brian L.' "
'Ehm, Lars' "
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_publ_volume                236.2180(20)
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_symmetry_space_group_name_H-M "P 63 m c"
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_publ_cell_formula_units_Z  2
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    2 x-y,+x,+z+1/2
    3 -y,x-y,+z
    4 -x,-y,+z+1/2
    5 y-x,-x,+z
    6 +y,y-x,+z+1/2
    7 y-x,+y,+z
    8 -x,y-x,+z+1/2
    9 -y,-x,+z
   10 x-y,-y,+z+1/2

```

11 +x,x-y,+z
 12 +y,+x,+z+1/2

ATOMIC COORDINATES AND DISPLACEMENT PARAMETERS

```

loop_
  _atom_site_type_symbol
  _atom_site_label
  _atom_site_fract_x
  _atom_site_fract_y
  _atom_site_fract_z
  _atom_site_occupancy
  _atom_site_thermal_displace_type
  _atom_site_U_iso_or_equiv
  _atom_site_symmetry_multiplicity

Al
Al1      0.83409(19)  0.6683(4)    0.97855(33)  1.0        Uani   0.00505   6
Al
Al2      0.33333       0.66667     0.7690(7)    1.0        Uani   0.00946   2
Al
Al3      0.3333       0.6667      0.1609(4)    1.0        Uani   0.00595   2
O
O1      0.0          0.0         0.0970(4)    1.0        Uani   0.00507   2
O
O2      0.97280(18)  0.48642(9)   0.11433(27)  1.0        Uani   0.00588   6
O
O3      0.16458(25)  0.83542(25)  0.87450(31)  1.0        Uani   0.00636   6
O
O4      0.66667       0.33333     0.86817     1.0        Uani   0.00548   2
H
H1      0.0423(12)   0.0212(6)    0.2134(7)    0.33333   Uiso   0.0152(12)  6

loop_ _atom_site_aniso_label
  _atom_site_aniso_U_11
  _atom_site_aniso_U_12
  _atom_site_aniso_U_13
  _atom_site_aniso_U_22
  _atom_site_aniso_U_23
  _atom_site_aniso_U_33

Al1      0.00350(34)  0.00201(24)  0.00168(25)  0.0040(5)   0.0034(5)   0.0078(6)
Al2      0.0103(8)    0.0052(4)    0.0          0.0103(8)   0.0          0.0078(14)
Al3      0.0039(4)    0.00196(19)  0.0          0.0039(4)   0.0          0.0100(13)
O1      0.0047(4)    0.00236(20)  0.0          0.0047(4)   0.0          0.0057(8)
O2      0.00475(29)  0.00238(14) -0.0014(4)   0.00505(25) -0.00068(19)  0.0077(4)
O3      0.00586(34)  0.0037(5)   0.00210(16)  0.00586(34) -0.00210(16)  0.0084(4)
O4      0.0060(5)    0.00298(27) 0.0          0.0060(5)   0.0          0.0045(10)

loop_ _atom_type_symbol
  _atom_type_number_in_cell
    O 16.0
    Al 10.0
  
```

H 2.0

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