

**Crystal Data:** Monoclinic. *Point Group:* 2/m. As tabular crystals to 400  $\mu\text{m}$ .

**Physical Properties:** *Cleavage:* Perfect on {001}. *Fracture:* Uneven. *Tenacity:* Brittle.  
Hardness = 2.5-3 D(meas.) = n.d. D(calc.) = 2.946

**Optical Properties:** Transparent. *Color:* Pale yellow, pale gray in transmitted light.

*Streak:* n.d. *Luster:* Silky.

*Optical Class:* Biaxial (-).  $\alpha = 1.642(2)$   $\beta = 1.664(2)$   $\gamma = 1.676(2)$   $2V(\text{meas.}) = 84.4(2)^\circ$   
 $2V(\text{calc.}) = 72^\circ$  *Dispersion:* Distinct, ( $r < v$ ).

**Cell Data:** Space Group: *C*2.  $a = 5.2024(5)$   $b = 8.9782(7)$   $c = 9.997(2)$   $\beta = 100.40(2)^\circ$   $Z = 2$

**X-ray Powder Pattern:** Cerchiara mine, Eastern Liguria, Italy.

4.51 (100), 2.592 (70), 2.574 (70), 2.385 (70), 9.9 (50), 1.503 (50), 4.34 (40)

<b>Chemistry:</b>	(1)
K <sub>2</sub> O	11.24
Li <sub>2</sub> O	7.20
V <sub>2</sub> O <sub>5</sub>	21.15
<u>SiO<sub>2</sub></u>	<u>58.46</u>
Total	98.05

(1) Cerchiara mine, Eastern Liguria, Italy; average electron microprobe analysis supplemented by laser ablation-inductively coupled plasma-mass spectrometry and Raman spectroscopy; corresponds to K<sub>0.99</sub>Li<sub>2.00</sub>V<sup>5+</sup><sub>0.97</sub>Si<sub>4.04</sub>O<sub>12</sub>.

**Mineral Group:** Mica group.

**Polymorphism & Series:** 1M polytype.

**Occurrence:** In manganeseiferous beds within the metacherts (prehnite-pumpellyite facies) of an ophiolitic sequence.

**Association:** Hematite, quartz, calcite.

**Distribution:** From the Cerchiara mine, Eastern Liguria, Italy.

**Name:** Honors Corrado Balestra (b. 1962), an Italian amateur mineralogist and expert on Ligurian minerals.

**Type Material:** Natural History Museum, Florence, Italy (3133/I).

**References:** (1) Lepore, G.O., L. Bindi, A. Zanetti, M.E. Ciriotti, O. Medenbach, and P. Bonazzi (2015) Balestraitite, KLi<sub>2</sub>VSi<sub>4</sub>O<sub>10</sub>O<sub>2</sub>, the first member of the mica group with octahedral V<sup>5+</sup>. *Amer. Mineral.*, 100, 608-614.