


Evidence for Chiral Wobbler in Nuclei

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Three $\Delta I = 1$ bands with the $\pi g_{9/2} \otimes \nu g_{9/2}$ configuration have been identified in ${}^{74}_{35}\text{Br}_{39}$. Angular distribution, linear polarization, and lifetime measurements were performed to determine the multipolarity, type, mixing ratio, and absolute transition probability of the transitions. By comparing these experimental observations with the corresponding fingerprints and the quantum particle rotor model calculations, the second and third lowest bands are, respectively, suggested as the chiral partner and one-phonon wobbling excitation built on the yrast band. The evidence indicates the first chiral wobbler in nuclei.

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Shape is one of the most fundamental properties for nuclei, since it is a manifestation of the self-organization of a finite fermionic system. Atomic nuclei generally exhibit spheroidal shape or axially symmetric shapes that deviate from the sphere. The loss of axial symmetry could involve triaxial deformation. The question of whether stable triaxial shapes exist in nuclei has been debated for decades. Until 2001, the discovery of nuclear chirality [1] and the wobbling mode [2] had provided direct evidence for the stable triaxial deformation in nuclei.

The existence of chirality in atomic nuclei was initially suggested by Frauendorf and Meng [3]. Chiral symmetry breaking manifests itself in the appearance of a pair of $\Delta I = 1$ doublet bands with the same parity, which are called chiral doublet bands [3]. Several fingerprints for ideal chiral doublet bands [3–7] are suggested as follows: (i) nearly degenerate in excitation energies, (ii) smooth dependence of energy staggering parameters $S(I)$ with spin, (iii) similar spin alignments, (iv) similar $B(E2)$ and $B(M1)$ values, (v) the odd-even staggering of $B(M1)$

values and opposite phase for in-band and interband transitions, and (vi) the vanishing of the interband $E2$ transitions at high spin.

The wobbling mode in nuclei was predicted in the 1970s in analogy to the rotating asymmetrical top [8]. It occurs when the core angular momentum wobbles about the principal axis with the largest moment of inertia in triaxial nuclei. These conditions may give rise to sequences of rotational bands with successive excitations of wobbling phonons, $n_w = 0, 1, 2, \dots$. The known fingerprints of the wobbling bands [2,8–11] are that the $n_w = 0$ and 1 bands exhibit similar moments of inertia, spin alignments, and $B(E2; I \rightarrow I - 2)$ values. In addition, the interband $\Delta I = 1$ transitions are dominated by the $E2$ component.

In the past two decades, chirality and the wobbling mode were established in a few mass regions of the nuclear chart. Candidate chiral doublet bands were reported experimentally in the $A \approx 80, 100, 130$, and 190 mass regions (see reviews [7,12–19] and references therein). In addition, wobbling bands were reported in the $A \approx 110$ [20,21],

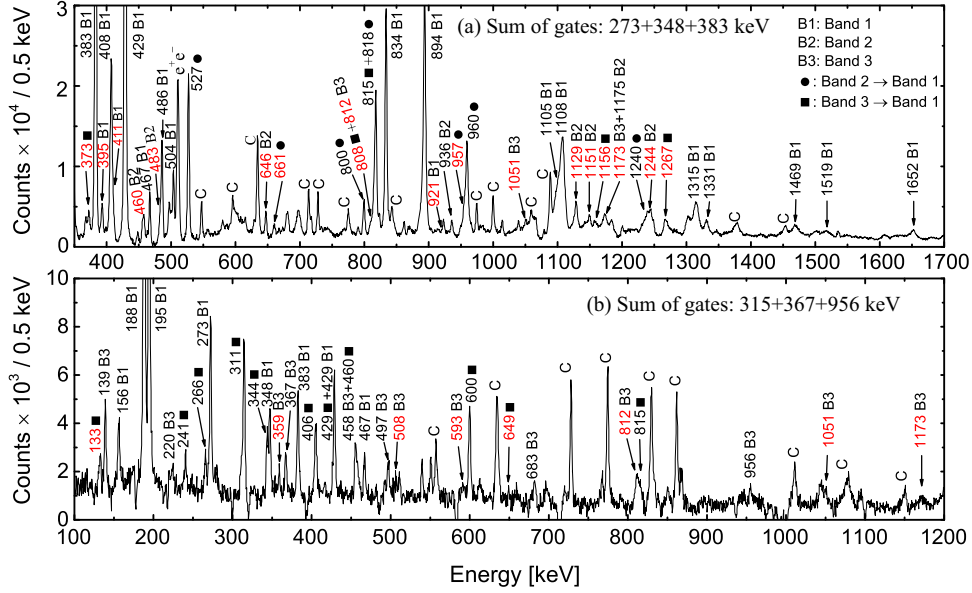


FIG. 2. The γ -ray coincidence spectra gated on the (a) 273 + 348 + 383 keV transitions and (b) 315 + 367 + 956 keV transitions in ^{74}Br . The peaks labeled C indicate contaminations. New transitions are marked as red.

In the neighboring isotopes $^{76,78,80,82}\text{Br}$, the yrast and second lowest bands based on the $\pi g_{9/2} \otimes \nu g_{9/2}$ configuration were interpreted as chiral doublet bands [57–60]. To investigate whether bands 1 and 2 in ^{74}Br are also associated with chirality, we compared the experimental character of bands 1 and 2 with the fingerprints of chiral doublet bands. The excitation energies $E(I)$, energy staggering parameters $S(I) = [E(I) - E(I - 1)]/2I$ and

absolute transition probabilities $B(E2)$ and $B(M1)$ for bands 1–3 as well as the $B(M1)$ and $E2$ fractions for interband $\Delta I = 1$ transitions between bands 1 and 2 and 1 and 3 are plotted in the left column of Fig. 6 (see Supplemental Material for numerical details [61]). As shown in Fig. 6, the energy differences of bands 1 and 2 are similar to those of chiral doublet bands in $^{76,78,80,82}\text{Br}$. Furthermore, the $S(I)$ of bands 1 and 2 shows a smooth variation as a function of spin. The two bands also have similar i_x (see Fig. 5), in-band $B(E2)$, and in-band $B(M1)$ values. The $B(M1)$ values exhibit odd-even staggering and the opposite phase of the staggering for the in-band and interband $\Delta I = 1$ transitions. In the high-spin regime, there are no obvious peaks at possible interband $\Delta I = 2$ $E2$ transition energies in the Supplemental Material figure [61]. Finally, as can be seen in Fig. 6, the interband $\Delta I = 1$ transitions between bands 1 and 2 are dominated by $M1$ components. In short, these experimental features fulfill all the fingerprints of chiral doublet bands, which indicates that bands 1 and 2 are a pair of chiral doublet bands.

Band 3 has similar i_x , $J^{(1)}$ (see Fig. 5), $S(I)$, and in-band $B(E2)$ values (see Fig. 6) to band 1, but one can see in Fig. 6 that the in-band $B(M1)$ values of band 3 have an opposite staggering phase compared to band 1, making band 3 different from the chiral partner. More importantly, the $E2$ fractions of the interband $\Delta I = 1$ transitions between bands 1 and 3 increase with spin and reach 90% at high spin, which are significantly larger than that of the other transitions in the present level scheme. These experimental features imply that the even and odd spin sequences of band 3 originate from one-phonon wobbling excitations of the odd and even spin sequences of band 1,

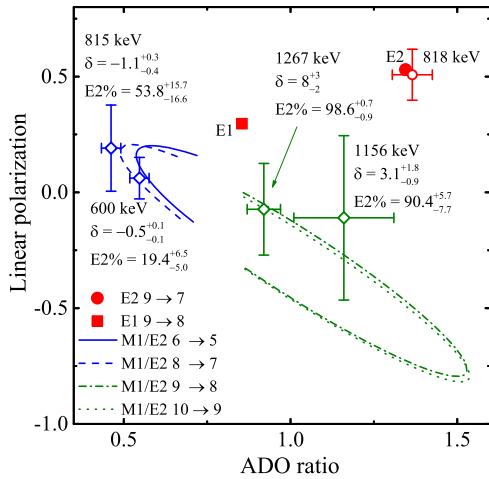


FIG. 3. Examples of experimental (open symbols with bars) and calculated (solid square, circle, as well as solid, dashed, dot-dashed, and dotted lines) ADO ratios and linear polarization values for the representative linking transitions between bands 1 and 3, and for a known $E2$ transition between bands 1 and 2. The mixing ratio value varies from -0.2 (lower end) to -5.1 (upper end), for the solid and dashed lines, and varies from 0.0 (lower end) to 11.4 (upper end), for the dot-dashed and dotted lines.

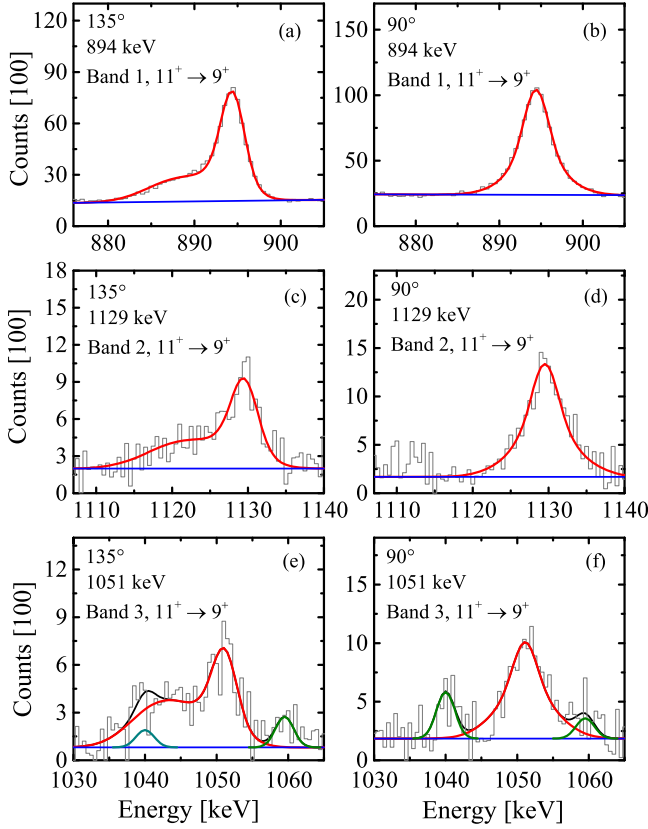


FIG. 4. Line shape fits to the (a),(b) 894, (c),(d) 1129, and (e), (f) 1051 keV transitions. The left and right columns correspond to the 135° and 90° detectors, respectively. Red line, Doppler broadened line shape of the analyzed transition; green line, the contamination peaks; black line, the result of fitting to the experimental data.

respectively. Based on the above discussion, chirality and the wobbling mode could coexist in ^{74}Br .

To further understand the exotic rotation mode in ^{74}Br , we have carried out calculations in the framework of the quantum PRM with the pairing gap $\Delta = 12/\sqrt{A}$ MeV [62–65]. The $g_{9/2}$ proton and neutron are described by a single- j shell Hamiltonian. In the calculations, the deformation parameters $(\beta_2, \gamma) = (0.45, 27.5^\circ)$ were used following the prediction of relativistic mean-field calculations [66]. Moreover, the moments of inertia of three axes $J_{i,s,l} = 10.5, 4.1, \text{ and } 1.9 \hbar^2/\text{MeV}$ were adopted to obtain the best agreement with the experimental data, where i, s , and l stand for intermediate, short, and long axes, respectively. The present ratios of moments of inertia are close to those of the hydrodynamical moments of inertia for $\gamma = 27.5^\circ$. The calculated results, shown in the right column of Fig. 6, reproduce the corresponding experimental data well.

The root-mean-square angular momentum components of \mathbf{R} along the i, s , and l axes are calculated and displayed in Fig. 7. The difference between the chiral and wobbling modes is mainly reflected in their directions of core angular

TABLE I. The level lifetimes measured in this Letter and (average value of) level lifetimes reported in the previous works [51–53].

| I^π [\hbar] | Band 1 | | Band 2 | Band 3 |
|---------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| | τ (ps) | τ (ps) | τ (ps) | τ (ps) |
| 6^+ | | 51^{+5a}_{-5} | | |
| 7^+ | | 14^{+2a}_{-2} | | $1.79^{+0.14}_{-0.13}$ |
| 8^+ | | 32^{+3a}_{-3} | $0.62^{+0.06}_{-0.06}$ | $1.21^{+0.18}_{-0.18}$ |
| 9^+ | | $2.4^{+0.5a}_{-0.5}$ | $0.53^{+0.11}_{-0.11}$ | $1.10^{+0.24}_{-0.18}$ |
| 10^+ | $1.32^{+0.13}_{-0.13}$ | $1.19^{+0.14b}_{-0.14}$ | $0.43^{+0.04}_{-0.04}$ | $0.38^{+0.10}_{-0.09}$ |
| 11^+ | $0.42^{+0.04}_{-0.04}$ | $0.46^{+0.05c}_{-0.05}$ | $0.25^{+0.03}_{-0.03}$ | <0.60 |
| 12^+ | $0.19^{+0.03}_{-0.03}$ | $0.22^{+0.05c}_{-0.05}$ | $0.10^{+0.06}_{-0.03}$ | |
| 13^+ | $0.21^{+0.02}_{-0.02}$ | $0.20^{+0.04c}_{-0.04}$ | <0.56 | |
| 14^+ | $0.14^{+0.03}_{-0.03}$ | $0.15^{+0.02c}_{-0.02}$ | <0.29 | |
| 15^+ | $0.08^{+0.01}_{-0.01}$ | $0.08^{+0.03c}_{-0.03}$ | | |
| 16^+ | <0.06 | $<0.20^d$ | | |
| 17^+ | <0.23 | $<0.18^d$ | | |

^aAverage value of lifetimes in Refs. [51,52].

^bLifetimes in Ref. [51].

^cAverage value of lifetimes in Refs. [51,53].

^dLifetimes in Ref. [53].

momentum. As shown in Fig. 7, bands 1 and 2 have similar R_i, R_s , and R_l , which agrees with the chiral picture. The R_i values of band 3 are about $1\hbar$ smaller than those of band 1 in the higher-spin range, which indicates that the core rotation of band 3 is partially transferred to the other two principal axes [2,32]. The rotational picture suggests that band 3 is the one-phonon wobbling band built on band 1. Therefore, the present theoretical calculations support the chiral interpretation for bands 1 and 2 and the wobbling excitation for band 3.

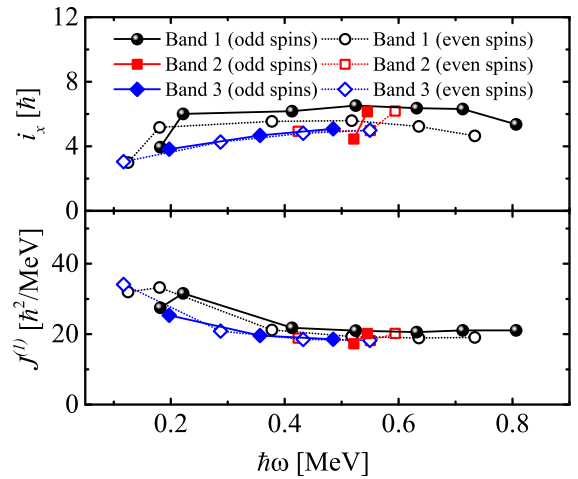


FIG. 5. Particle alignment i_x and kinematic moments of inertia $J^{(1)}$ of bands 1, 2 and 3 of ^{74}Br . The used Harris parameters are $J_0 = 6 \text{ MeV}^{-1}$, $J_1 = 15 \text{ MeV}^{-3}$.

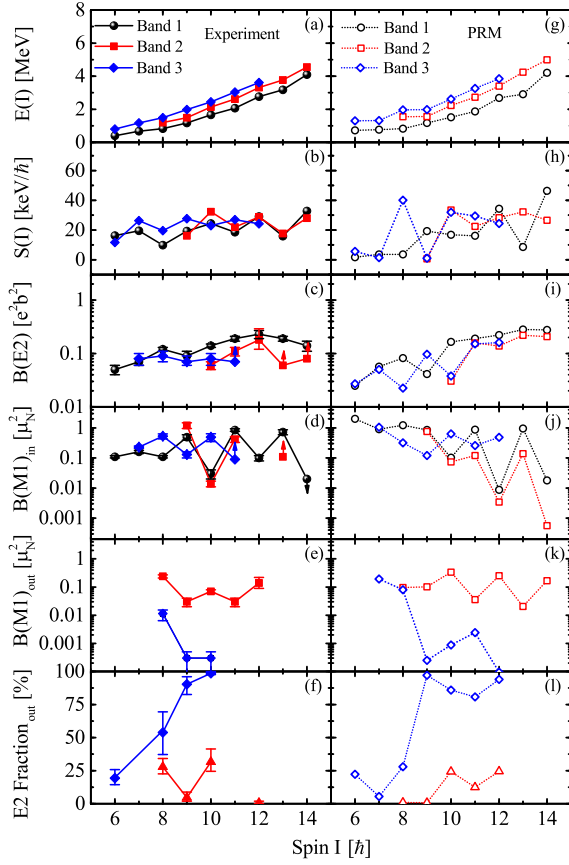


FIG. 6. Experimental (a)–(f) and calculated (g)–(l) excitation energies $E(I)$, energy staggering parameters $S(I) = [E(I) - E(I-1)]/2I$ and absolute transition probabilities $B(E2)$ and $B(M1)$ for bands 1, 2, and 3, as well as $B(M1)$ and E2 fraction of interband $\Delta I = 1$ transitions between bands 1, 2 and 1, 3.

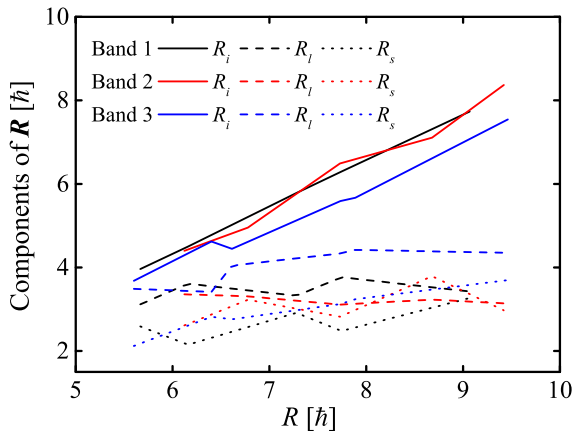


FIG. 7. Root-mean-square angular momentum components along the intermediate (i), long (l), and short (s) axes of the core angular momentum \mathbf{R} as a function of R (calculated as $\sqrt{R_i^2 + R_s^2 + R_l^2}$) for bands 1 (black lines), 2 (red lines), and 3 (blue lines).

In summary, three $\Delta I = 1$ bands with the $\pi g_{9/2} \otimes \nu g_{9/2}$ configuration have been identified in odd-odd ^{74}Br . By comparing the experimental observations with the fingerprints of chirality and wobbling as well as PRM calculations, the second and third lowest bands have been, respectively, interpreted as the chiral partner and one-phonon wobbling excitation built on the yrast band. The observed chiral wobblers indicates that nuclear chirality can be robust against wobbling excitation. Simultaneously, the existence of the wobbling mode was extended to the $A \approx 80$ mass region and odd-odd nucleus for the first time. This finding provides a unique candidate to study chirality and the wobbling mode in a single nucleus, which manifests the diversity and complexity of the angular momentum coupling modes of nuclei. The present study opens a new arena to investigate the fundamental symmetry breaking in the $A \approx 80$ mass region and more examples in experiment of this excitation mode are expected in other mass regions. We will further investigate this chiral-wobbling nucleus experimentally, such as with a thin target experiment and g -factor measurement in the future.

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