

Fossilized frogs yield bone marrow

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Scientists say they've extracted bone marrow from fossilized frogs and salamanders that died 10 million years ago in the swamps of northeastern Spain.

The first fossilized bone marrow known to science was discovered in remarkable detail, the BBC reported, and provides scientists with possible traces of organic molecules, protein and even, possibly, DNA.

Bone marrow is the tissue that fills the center of large bones, producing platelets and red and white blood cells. Scientists are studying the material for traces of organic molecules, protein and DNA.

"Finding soft tissue like this is so important because it gives an insight into the physiology of ancient organisms, and how their bodies worked," Maria McNamara of University College Dublin told the BBC. "The fact that we've got red bone marrow in the salamander shows their blood cells were produced in the bone marrow; in the modern salamander it is not, it is produced in the spleen."

An initial report on the discovery appears in the journal *Geology*.

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