

Under the microscope #9 - skate head

February 17 2012

Under the Microscope is a collection of videos that show glimpses of the natural and man-made world in stunning close-up. They are released every Monday and Thursday and you can see them here: bit.ly/A6bwCE

Dr Gillis: “This is a picture of the head of an embryonic skate (*Leucoraja erinacea*). A skate is a cartilaginous fish, closely related to sharks and stingrays. This embryo has been stained with dyes that colour the skeleton – cartilage is blue, and mineralised tissue is red – and then cleared with chemicals to make it transparent. The result is a specimen that shows the complex shape and arrangement of different skeletal tissues during embryonic development. I use this staining procedure to visualise the skeleton following experimental manipulation. This allows me to investigate how different genes and proteins are involved in controlling the formation and growth of different skeletal tissues in these fishes.”

The skate image is approximately 3cm across.

More information: www.pdn.cam.ac.uk/~jag93

Provided by University of Cambridge

Citation: Under the microscope #9 - skate head (2012, February 17) retrieved 23 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2012-02-microscope-skate.html>

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