SFB 680

Molecular Basis of Evolutionary Innovations

Molekulare Grundlagen evolutionärer Innovationen

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The starlet sea anemone *Nematostella vectensis* as a model for Evo-Devo: investigations of body axis formation

Although cnidarians are traditionally regarded as radially symmetrical animals, anthozoan cnidarians (corals and sea anemones) are displaying internal asymmetries generating a secondary body axis, perpendicular to the primary. This is somehow reminiscent of bilaterality. In the starlet sea anemone *Nematostella vectensis* the formation of both body axes are currently studied. These studies, together with others, could provide insights into the evolutionary steps leading to bilaterally symmetrical animals and the possibility to reconstruct the common ancestor of bilaterians and cnidarians, the Ur-Eumetazoa.
This talk will introduce the model organism *Nematostella vectensis*, summarize the current knowledge of the formation of both body axes and outline the other questions addressed in this model in the Technau Lab at the University of Vienna.

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Biocenter, Zülpicher Str. 47b, Seminar Room 3.003, 3rd floor

Host: Kristen Panfilio

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