



Figure 2.4 A section through the retina (after Sekular and Blake, 1994)

2.1.4 The structure of the retina

The retina is an extension of the brain. The visual system has four photoreceptor types in the retina, each containing a different photopigment. These four types are conventionally grouped into two classes, rods and cones. All the rod photoreceptors are the same, containing the same photopigment and hence having the same spectral sensitivity. The relative spectral sensitivity of the rod photoreceptors is shown in Figure 2.5. The other three photoreceptor types are all cones, each with a different photopigment. Figure 2.6 shows the relative spectral sensitivity functions of the three cone photoreceptor types, called short (S), medium (M) and long (L) wavelength cones.