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豆辞典

サンゴの骨格

サンゴはポリプと呼ばれる肉質の体の下部に、炭酸カルシウムの骨格を作る。化石として残るのは、この骨格の部分である。骨格には、ポリプの隔膜に対応した放射状の壁が見られる。造礁サンゴの多くは、この隔壁が6の倍数あることから、六放サンゴと呼ばれる。

写真は、石垣島サンゴ礁の現生カメノコキクメイシ骨格の薄片(左)と、エジプトシナイ半島の白亜紀中期のキクメイシ科の化石の薄片(右) (×1.3)。

(地質調査所地質標本館所蔵標本；撮影：佐藤喜男・巖谷敏光；文：茅根 創)

