

Hilltop Pet & Aquariums

Axolotl Information Sheet

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Open Monday - Friday 9:30am-6pm Weekends & Public Holidays 10am - 5pm

The Axolotl

Axolotls should not be placed in a tank with fish, turtles, etc. as they can inflict a great deal of damage to the axolotl, including loss of limbs and gills. Axolotls do have the ability to re-grow their limbs but not the 'feathers' on top of their head which are actually their gills which enable them to breathe underwater. The fish may also be eaten by the axolotl. If your axolotl shows any signs of damage or illness you can ask us for advice on the best things to do.

Housing

One to two axolotls can live happily in a 24" (60cm) long aquarium. They should not be housed in groups of more than two, unless they are in a tank larger than 24", as accidental limb loss can occur at feeding time. Axolotls should have smooth pebbles at the bottom of the tank as they can swallow them. Rocks and live plants can be used in the tank but make sure there are no sharp edges that could damage the axolotl. No special lighting is required for keeping the axolotls. If you are going to add live plants, you can use an aquarium light for plant growth.

Temperature

The optimum water temperature for axolotls is between 14°C - 18°C. They can become dull and refuse to eat if the temperature drops below 10°C. If the water temperature is below 14°C, a heater should be used to reach the optimum temperature.

Water Conditions & Filtration

The water should be kept at a pH of 7.2-7.6. If using tap water, chlorine neutralizer must be used at a triple dose to remove the chlorine and chloramines, as the chlorine and chloramines will burn the axolotls. Rainwater (assumably not toxic) can also be used. Aquarium salts should be added to rainwater as it is too soft.

Gentle flow rate filters should be used for axolotls.

Water Changes

If your aquarium has satisfactory filtration, water changes should be done every 4 weeks. If there is no filtration, weekly changes are recommended.

This should be done with a gravel syphon cleaner, taking out a maximum of 25% at any given time - unless advised otherwise. Taking out too much water will change the pH, hardness and other water conditions too much which can stress the axolotls and may even result in death.

The sponge from your filter must always be rinsed in tap water with chlorine neutraliser added as chlorine kills the good bacteria set up in the sponge. They are not meant to be spotless, as long as you remove the major debris, it is clean enough.

Water Changes (cont.)

The best way to add water is to put the new water into a bucket, add de-chlorinator (at a triple dose rate or water hardening crystals if rainwater), then add to your tank. Recheck and adjust your pH every 6-8 hours until it is correct.

When cleaning your tank, be sure never to use any chemicals as these are deadly to your axolotl.

Using an ammonia test kit is the best way to monitor if the tank is polluted and can often save the lives of the axolotl.

Feeding

You can feed your axolotls Fish Fuel frozen goldfish dinner, axolotl pellets (only if the axolotl is small), sinking fish tablets, crickets (frozen- not alive), black worms or small fish which are all available here.

Axolotls should be fed every day in summer and every three days in winter, if the temperature is very cold you should not feed them at all as they will not be able to digest it, and will probably regurgitate it.

Axolotls are almost completely blind. You can feed them by hand to ensure the food doesn't go to waste.

Axolotls can be fed in the tank or in a container of water out of the tank.

Handling

If you need to remove the axolotl from the aquarium, it is best to do so using a fine net to prevent their limbs from getting caught.

Never leave axolotls out of the water for any period of time otherwise they can suffocate.

When placing the axolotl back into the aquarium, never drop them as you can cause them injury.

This brochure was put together by the staff of Hilltop Pet & Aquariums as a general guide to assist you in raising your pet and advising requirements to keep your friend happy and healthy.

If you cannot provide the proper care and housing, we strongly suggest you not purchase the animal.

We have books available for sale should you require more information.

