

## **Congratulations on the purchase of your new "AXOLOTL" - MEXICAN WALKING FISH from Passion for Pets**

You can expect many years of enjoyment from these new and unusual pets. To assist you with this and to help you give the best of care to your new axolotl we have provided the following information.

### **WHAT YOU NEED TO START AN AXOLOTL TANK**

- A tank with a cover glass. 24" or larger
- A heater
- A power filter ( preferably one with a removable sponge)
- Coarse gravel ( the larger the better)
- A fine net
- A gravel cleaner
- A few live plants ( elodea or vallisnera)
- Rocks ( enough to make some caves)
- Water Conditioning Salts
- Chlorine Neutraliser
- pH test kit
- Water hardness test kit
- Ammonia test kit
- Food ( see section on feeding for more details)



### **SETTING UP YOUR TANK**

It is best to have your tank set up and running at least 3 days before adding your axolotl.

#### **STEPS TO SETTING UP YOUR TANK**

1. Select the position for your tank; keep in mind that it is best not to place your tank in direct sunlight.



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2. Thoroughly rinse your tank with fresh water free of any dust or particles.
3. Thoroughly rinse your gravel and pour it into the tank. Using your hand level out the gravel, you should have an even thickness of around 3 - 5cm.
4. Thoroughly rinse your rocks and position them in your tank.
5. Fill your tank to around 3cm from the top with fresh cold tap water. Keep a count of how many litres of water you add.
6. Add the appropriate amount of Water Conditioning Salts (1 teaspoon per 10 litres) and Chlorine Neutraliser.
7. Place your power filter and heater (set your heater to around 18 - 22 C) into the tank, putting the heater at the opposite end to the filter. Now turn them on. Ensure that both the heater and filter are below water level.
8. Let your tank run for a day or so then test the pH and hardness levels.

Now all you have to do is leave your tank run for 3 days before introducing your axolotl.

### **PURCHASING YOUR AXOLOTL**

Your Passion for Pets staff member will help you with your selection of an axolotl. Generally 2 adult axolotls can be kept in a 24" tank, then allow an extra 10 litres for each additional adult.

### **SEXING AN AXOLOTL**

The male axolotl tend to be skinnier and have a longer tail than the females. An adult male has a pronounced bump underneath between the hind legs. The female axolotl usually has a shorter wider head than the male, the females belly gets quite fat when she begins to produce eggs.

### **ARRIVING HOME**

When introducing a new axolotl to your tank you need to float the unopened bag in your tank for 5 - 10 minutes for your axolotl to adjust to the new water temperature. After this time open the bag and gently release your axolotl into your tank. Don't be alarmed if your axolotl refuses to eat for the first day or two as they quite often do this while they are unsure of their new environment.



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### **FEEDING YOUR AXOLOTL**

Most axolotls enjoy eating a varied diet. We suggest mainly feeding Axolotl pellets in conjunction with either frozen brine shrimp, frozen beef heart & liver or freeze dried tubifex worms. Some axolotls enjoy lean beef strips around 4cm long .5cm thick. It is important to remove uneaten food from the tank immediately. The best way to feed your axolotl is by hand so you can be sure of exactly how much it is eating. You Passion for Pets staff member will be happy to show you how.

### **TANK MAINTAINENCE**

Once a week you should perform a pH and hardness test on your tank. Once a fortnight you should clean your tank. Use a magnet cleaner or a fresh scourer to clean the glass of algae then using a gravel cleaner remove 1/3 of the water. Make sure you get into all the corners to remove all uneaten food. Fill your tank up with fresh cold tap water and count the litres so you can add the correct amount of Water Conditioning Salts and Chlorine Neutraliser. Once a month you should perform an ammonia test.

### **TEMPERATURE**

The preferred temperature for the axolotl is between 18 -22 C, Since axolotls are cold-blooded animals, its metabolic rate is proportional to its body temperature. If the temperature drops below this level your axolotl will have difficulty digesting its food and may loose its appetite altogether. You will notice that your axolotl has a larger appetite and is active in warmer temperatures.

### **LIFESPAN**

An axolotl can live between 10 - 15 years and can grow quite large, around 8" and bigger. Axolotls will start breeding from 1 year onwards.

### **WATER QUALITY GUIDE**

pH	6.8 - 7.4
Hardness	100 - 150 ppm
Temperature	18 - 22 C.



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### **CONTACT US**

Our friendly staff is always available to answer your questions so please don't hesitate to contact us for further information.