

Axolotl

Ambystoma mexicanum

Critically Endangered

Fact Sheet · Colouring Page · Activities

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Axolotl — Fact Sheet

Scientific name	Ambystoma mexicanum
Conservation status	Critically Endangered
Region	Lake Xochimilco, Mexico City, Mexico
Habitat	Freshwater lakes and canals; prefers calm, shallow water with dense aquatic vegetation
Diet	Carnivore — worms, insect larvae, small fish, crustaceans
Weight	60–227 g
Size	15–45 cm
Lifespan	10–15 years in captivity; shorter in the wild
Wild population	Fewer than 1,000 estimated remaining in the wild

Did You Know?

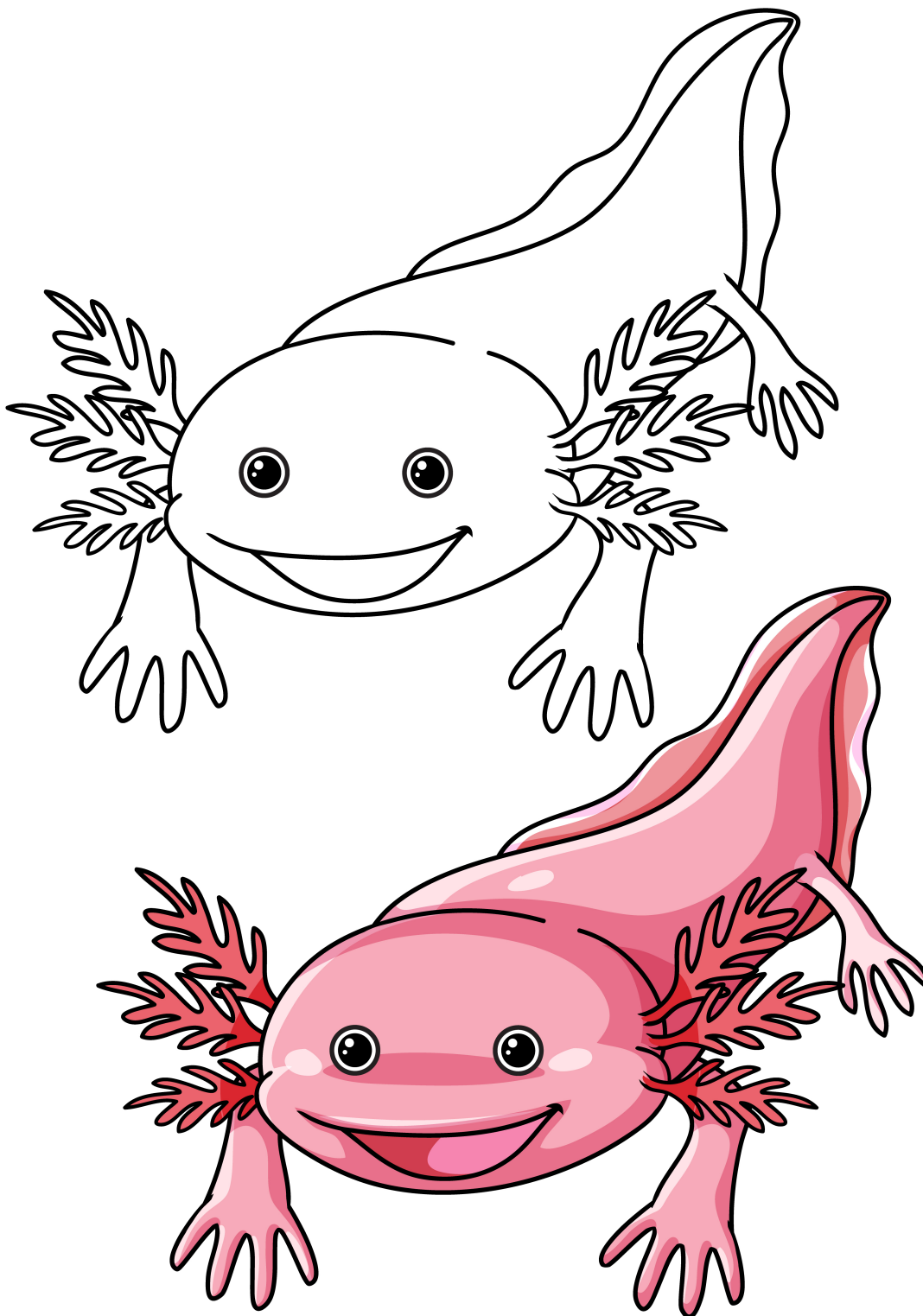
- Axolotls can regenerate entire limbs, their spinal cord, heart tissue, and parts of their brain.
- They are neotenic — they keep juvenile features (including external gills) their entire lives.
- Their feathery gills fan out from either side of the head like a crown.
- Axolotls occur naturally in several colours: wild-type dark, albino pink, golden, and leucistic white.
- Unlike most amphibians, axolotls spend their entire lives underwater.

Threats to Survival

1. Habitat destruction — Lake Xochimilco has shrunk dramatically due to urban expansion
2. Water pollution from agricultural run-off and untreated waste
3. Introduced species such as tilapia and carp that eat axolotl eggs and juveniles
4. Illegal collection for the pet trade and traditional medicine

Colour Me: Axolotl

Wild axolotls are dark brownish-grey with golden speckles. Captive morphs include albino pink, leucistic white with pink gills, and golden yellow.



Axolotl — Activities

Word Search

Find all 8 words hidden in the grid.

W	N	E	O	T	E	N	Y	K	G	R	A
U	P	M	U	O	E	I	E	H	X	E	M
R	R	I	X	S	N	S	M	L	H	G	P
E	E	Q	A	P	C	O	Y	B	P	R	H
D	E	K	U	X	C	F	Z	V	I	O	I
N	T	C	A	I	O	M	M	T	N	W	B
O	Q	I	X	L	S	L	R	A	K	V	I
X	D	E	V	R	L	Y	O	I	Y	U	A
K	M	D	J	N	L	F	O	T	A	X	N
X	I	Q	Y	F	I	Q	D	U	L	J	U
Q	T	G	E	L	G	Y	F	R	Y	Q	A
T	K	P	A	D	L	Z	J	H	B	H	S

AXOLOTL	GILLS	NEOTENY	MEXICO
AMPHIBIAN	REGROW	LAKE	PINK

Match It Up

Draw a line from each word on the left to its meaning on the right.

Axolotl	a critically endangered Mexican salamander
Neoteny	keeping juvenile traits into adulthood
Gills	feathery organs used to breathe underwater
Regenerate	to regrow a lost body part
Endemic	found only in one specific location

Fill in the Blanks

1. Axolotls are a type of _____.
2. They can _____ lost limbs and organs.
3. Axolotls breathe through feathery _____ on their head.
4. In the wild they live only in Lake _____, Mexico.

Answers: amphibian / regenerate / gills / Xochimilco

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