

AMAZING ANIMALS: AXOLOTL

Axolotls are a type of amphibian. Amphibians' bodies usually change completely when they grow into an adult: their gills close off and they grow lungs so that they can live on land, but axolotls' bodies never change. It's like they never grow up!



The word amphibian means 'two-lives'. Amphibians spend their lives in the water and on land.



Axolotls can only be found in a lake and a few canals in Mexico central America. Axolotls find their food by smell, and will "snap" at any meal, sucking the food into their stomachs.



The photo above shows the re-growing of arms and legs after severe damage. This is in a salamandar, a close relative of the axolotl. The axolotl is able to re-grow limbs in the same way.

If an axolotl loses a body part, it grows again perfectly. This can happen up to 100 times! Sometimes an axolotl will damage an arm or leg, and not only will that arm or leg heal, but another one will grow too, giving the axolotl an extra limb.

Axolotls can also rebuild their jaws, spines, and even brains without any scarring.





There is a wide variety of axolotl colours, this one here is called the 'wildtype', which is green, brown with tiny bits of gold (which you can see in its eyes).

Discuss the answers to the following questions:

1. What do you find the most amazing about axolotls? Why?
2. Would you like to be an axolotl? Why/why not?
3. Is there an animal which you think is more amazing than an axolotl? What is it and why is it more amazing?



Now write three facts that you have just read into your book. Then write what you feel about what you have learnt.