

Mission Impossible: Adoptaxolotl

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When you think of an axolotl maybe you imagine a small slimy pink thing, or maybe you don't even know what to think. These charming critters are a web footed type of salamander, that come in a variety of colors and variations. That might be the reason that these guys rose to popularity in the exotic pet trade. Or maybe, you'd have the opportunity to spot one of them in the wild. All the way down in the burbling stream of Lake Xochimilco in Mexico, you might have the opportunity to see one of these rare creatures.

There are now less than 1000 left in the wild, since their population density has "plummeted 99.5% in under two decades". Some may ask, well why is this specific creature so important? Apart from the need to preserve biodiversity, these remarkable animals have astounded researchers, as some claim these "critters are also studied by cancer researchers for their unique resistance to developing cancerous tissues."

Axolotls have long been a mystery, or even a living paradox, in the science world due to their extraordinary ability to regrow their limbs. These creatures have been studied and known to form portions of their hearts to even parts of their brain. Their biological superpower has not gone unnoticed and they have captivated scientists and biologists alike. But in order to have hope to make scientific advancements, we need to rescue this amphibian from extinction. Conservation efforts have been taken by introducing this wonderful program that has been working to restore their numbers.

Now people can get involved and try to save these wonderful creatures. A program was launched called "AdoptAxolotl", and it's exactly what it sounds like. Members can virtually adopt a pet for around \$35, and you can get live updates on its health. Otherwise, you can spend a little less and buy the axolotl a meal. This program lets Mexico's government set up breeding programs and try to restore the damage climate change has been wrecking on their habitat. Researchers believe that, "these species will continue to experience decreases in suitable natural habitats due to droughts. Droughts have already eliminated one of their original habitats, Lake Texaco". How can you get involved? You can begin to spread awareness about this on social media, or sign petitions so that people can't pollute their homes anymore.

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