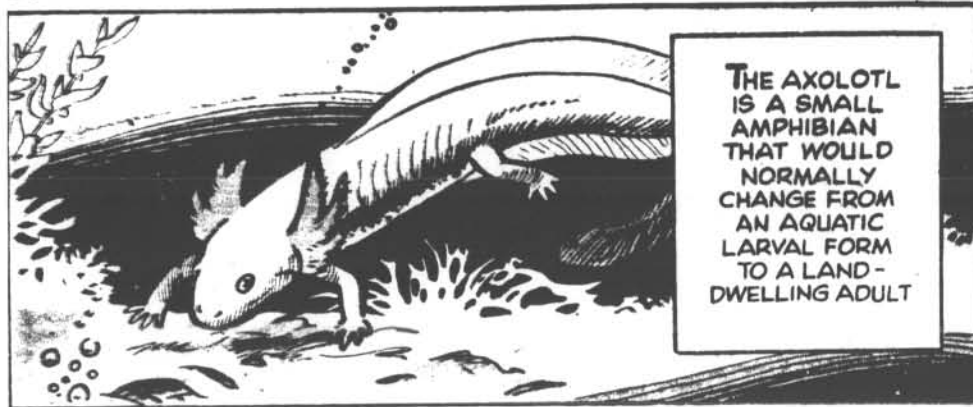


Readers of AXOLOTL NEWSLETTER might be interested in a few Ambystoma recipes in Ernest A. Liner's A HERPETOLOGICAL COOKBOOK, HOW TO COOK AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES, published last year and available from the author (310 Malibou Blvd., Houma, LA 70360). Though none of the recipes on page five is for Ambystoma mexicanum specifically, those for preparing "achoques" look savory and apply equally well to "axolotls." The Tarascan name "achoque," like its Nahuatl equivalent "axolotl," is regionally applied in Mexico to any large, gilled Ambystoma (A. mexicanum, A. dumerilii, neotenic A. tigrinum, etc.).

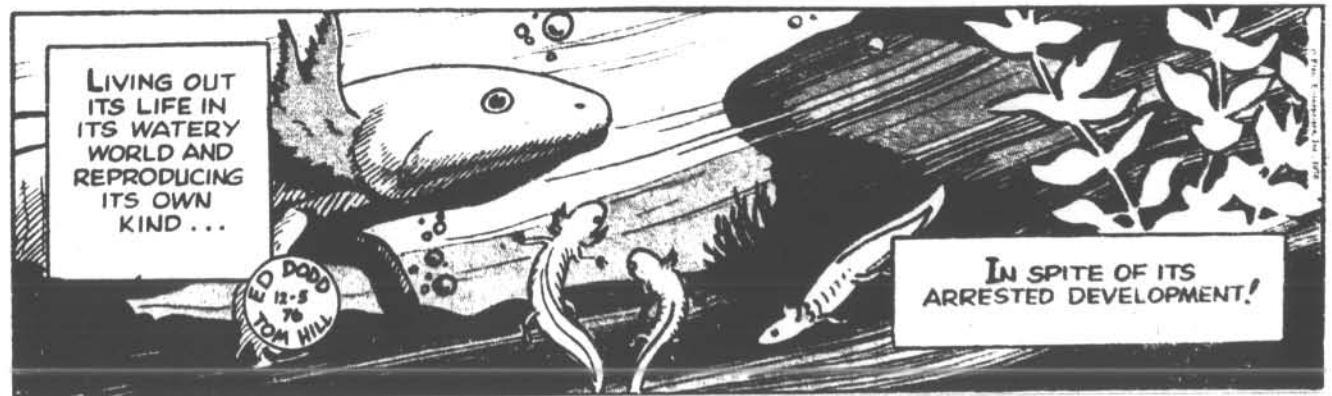
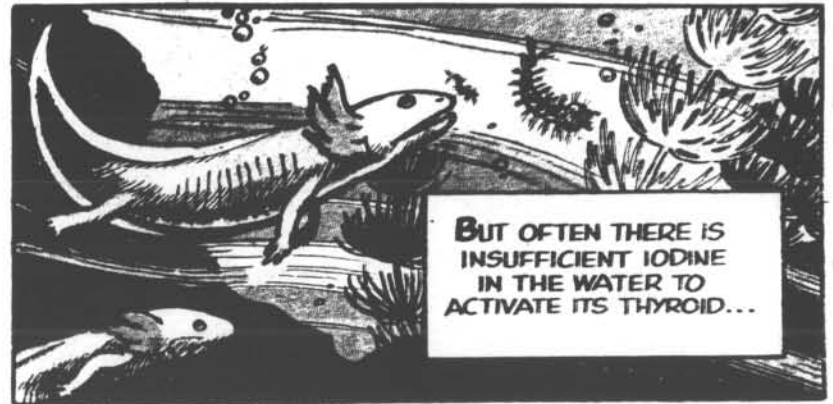
It is clear that various species of Mexican Ambystoma, including the axolotl, are still prepared and eaten by some, especially as "health" food for specific purposes: for lung congestion, to ensure a successful pregnancy, to help one gain weight, and others. However, one quick-witted and perceptive Michoacano told us, with a passive face, "Oh, we don't eat them; we just sell them to scientists!"

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MARK TRAIL



by Ed Dodd and Tom Hill





The adjustable axolotl

DOWN MEXICO WAY, and in some of our western lakes, lives a creature called the axolotl.

His odd name was given him by the Aztecs.

But his name isn't the only odd thing about him. In the first place, he isn't, technically, a finished product of any ordinary life cycle. He's simply the aquatic larva of the North American salamander, *Ambystoma tigrinum*. And he has an ability to adjust himself to changes in his living conditions which might well cause a lot of us humans to turn grass-green with envy.

In some of these western lakes, as long as there is plenty of food and water, he apparently feels no urge to make a change. So he doesn't. He lives, reproduces, and dies an axolotl.

But suppose, as sometimes happens, the water starts to dry up. The axolotl can't live on dry land. He can, however, as experiments have shown, dispense with his gills and start breathing with his lungs, lose his fins, develop eyelids, and thus become a salamander which lives on dry land very happily.

Like the axolotl, man is often confronted with events which threaten to make a major change in his living conditions. But, unlike the axolotl, he can't transform himself physically to meet them.

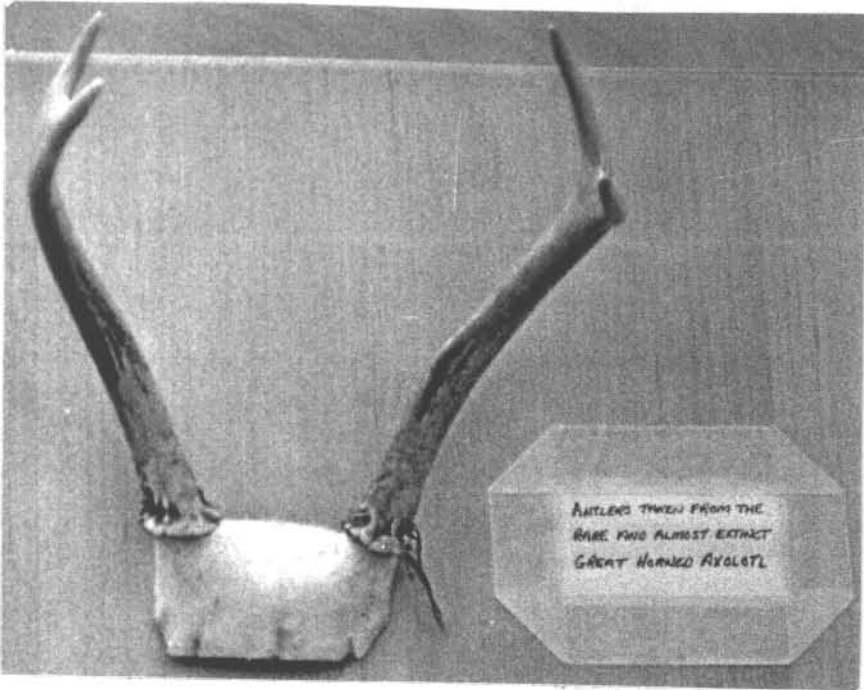
So, if he is wise, he takes other steps to cope with these threats. He carries insurance.

His home won't dry up. But it may burn down, or even blow away. Insurance is the answer to that.

He might be hurt and unable to work. Or an auto accident might result in a judgment against him which could take away his house and put a mortgage on his earning power for years. Insurance is the answer to that.

And if, unlike the axolotl, he worries about what may happen to his family after he's gone, insurance is the answer to that, too.

MORAL: Insure in The Travelers. All forms of insurance and surety bonds. The Travelers Insurance Company, The Travelers Indemnity Company, The Travelers Fire Insurance Company, Hartford, Connecticut.



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