

EDITOR'S NOTE (George M. Malacinski)

The I.U. Axolotl Colony continues its service mission to "outside laboratories". Mr. Craig Watson, who had been associated with the Axolotl Colony for over four years, and his wife, Mary, resigned in November, 1986 to pursue other endeavors. All of us at the Colony wish them the best!

A smooth transition was achieved by promoting his former assistant, Ms. Susan Duhon to the top position in the Colony - Research Manager. She has been employed by the Colony for 3 years, and is, therefore, acquainted with all aspects of its operation. She, in turn, promoted Mr. David Able - a long time employee of the I.U. Axolotl Colony - to the position of Research Technician. In the future, concerning availability of material or shipments, please contact either Susan or Dave. The telephone number remains unchanged ([812] 335-8260).

State of the Indiana University Axolotl Colony-1987

Susan Duhon

The colony is now at the peak of the 1987 breeding season. We have about 500 adults in our breeding stock, and, since the season began, we have had 124 spawns. Compare this number with the 88 obtained during the same period last year and the 82 obtained the year before that. The spawns from January 1 number 54, compared to 43 last year and 39 the year before. As you can see, we are having a very good year.

All pigment genes are readily available, including, for the first time in several years, the axanthic gene. We are having good success obtaining spawns that segregate the eyeless gene as well. Although we have a number of animals identified as carriers of the cardiac gene, these animals are stubborn spawners and of fickle health. We will, however, continue to attempt to fill requests for this gene. In addition, we have been able to obtain spawns segregating s (short toes), mi (microphthalmia), and pi (pinhead). Let us know if you are interested in one of these or in any other gene.

As a result of our recent success in obtaining "normal" spawns, several of which were very large, we expect to have a large supply of small larvae available over the next two months or more. Many of these are going begging, so please let us know if you are able to use some of these.

We continue to cull non-breeding and excess adults, and we will try to fill orders for these, but in most cases we are not able to fill requests for breeding stock. Occasionally, however, we may be able to help with a request for one or two breeding animals (or subadults).

I believe that the overall health of the colony animals has been improving over the past several years as a result of constant efforts at disease control and the regular culling of unproductive animals. For bacterial disease problems, we are currently using Amikacin. I am still collecting data and evaluating the efficacy of the treatment regimen.

We thank you for your support and encouragement during the past year, and we look forward to another productive year.