

Water Bottle Brine Shrimp

takes 2 days at room temp (20C)

you need:

non-iodized table salt (NaCl) (or you can use sea salt)

flask (500ml water bottle with pop-up lid)

Brine Shrimp eggs (I can send you these but in the short term you can get some from a local pet store, though hatch rate may be low)

Aquarium pump and air line (or use building air if you have it)

Paper towels/coffee filters/ something to strain the shrimp off of the brine at the end of the 2-day cycle

Fill water bottle about 4/5 full with tepid-warm water.

Add 1 tablespoon salt. Shake to dissolve.

Add a pinch to 1/8 tsp brine shrimp eggs (depending on how many larvae you want to feed). Shake to mix.

Remove lid, but keep close for use later.

Insert air line and start aeration. Vigorous aeration is good. A small aquarium pump should suffice. You may need to weight to air line or somehow insure that it stays down in the bottom of the bottle.

After 2 days at room temp (18-20), the bottle should look orangish instead of brownish. This is the hatched shrimp. Screw on the lid leaving the pop-up part closed. Invert the bottle and find a place to hold it in this position for about 5 minutes. The empty shells will collect on the surface of the water. The living shrimp will be in the water column under the surface down to the bottom.

During this time place paper towel or coffee filter over a plastic cup or container. This will filter out the shrimp from the salty water. The concentration of salt good for the shrimp is NOT good for the axolotls.

Without shaking up the bottle, hold it over the filter and container and pull down on the spout to open. Let the water run through the lid and filter until you have collected all the shrimp that you need or until the empty shell-layer nears the lid. Then upright the bottle, trying not to allow the empty shells to escape. It isn't a tragedy if a few get mixed in with the shrimp, just nicer for the animals' container if the extra debris isn't there. If you are saving some of this shrimp in the bottle for later, you can refrigerate it for 24 hours. Otherwise, rinse the bottle and start again.

Take what has collected in the filter and invert it into the larvae's water. The shrimp will swim/float away and you will see the axolotls start to jerk as they grab the food. Their bellies will get orange as they fill up on brine shrimp.