

The Dugong Show: 24-hour webcast shows star Thai sea cows

July 7 2019



Mariam captured hearts in viral social media posts last month, while Jamil washed ashore further up the coast a week ago

A round-the-clock webcast starring two beloved baby dugongs in Thailand named Mariam and Jamil went live Sunday, allowing a more in-

depth look at the celebrity sea cows.

Mariam captured hearts in viral social media posts last month showing her playfully nuzzling up to rescuers in shallow waters off southwestern Thailand, while Jamil washed ashore further up the coast a week ago.

The orphaned dugong duo are being held separately, but anyone with an internet connection can now see them through a 24-hour livestream that uses eight camera angles and scheduled feeding times.

"We show them live because we don't want people to disrupt them by going to see them at the current locations," said Kongkiat Kittiwatanawong, director of the Phuket Marine Biological Center.

He added cameras will also help with monitoring their recovery.

A little after 2pm Jamil was seen splashing away in a small pool in the Phuket center.

Normally dugongs don't leave their mothers until they are a little more than a year.

Mariam is female and believed to be about six months old, while Jamil is half her age.

Experts say interest in the dugongs has helped galvanise awareness in ocean conservation.

Both were found in southern Thailand, home to about 250 dugongs, which are closely related to the manatee and classified as vulnerable.



Mariam is female and believed to be about six months old

The slow-moving mammals feed on sea grass but are at risk from habitat loss, water pollution, and nets used in fishing.

A Thai Princess gave Jamil his name, which means "handsome sea prince" in the Yawi language used in southern provinces by Malay Muslims.

The dugongs are the latest marine creatures to make headlines in Thailand, whose plastic-choked waters are also a threat to habitats.

Last year a whale died off the country's coast after swallowing more than

80 plastic bags.

Livestream link: mariumthaidugong.dmcr.go.th/

© 2019 AFP

Citation: The Dugong Show: 24-hour webcast shows star Thai sea cows (2019, July 7) retrieved 27 January 2023 from <https://phys.org/news/2019-07-dugong-hour-webcast-star-thai.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.