

Dugongs

Dugongs are gentle sea creatures. They are found in warm coastal waters including around Australia.

Dugongs are large, grey-brown animals with flat tails, flippers and rounded heads. The part of a dugong's face with the nose and mouth is called a snout or muzzle. Near the top of the muzzle are two nostrils which are used for breathing air. A dugong's body is the perfect shape for gliding slowly through the water.

Dugongs have excellent hearing and can communicate with their offspring by squeaking and making pip-like noises. The offspring stay with their mothers for up to two years until they can survive on their own.

Dugongs have poor eyesight. On the muzzle, dugongs have long bristles which are very sensitive and help dugongs to locate food. These mild-mannered herbivores feed on seagrass which grows from the seabed. Dugongs can hold their breath for 10 minutes at a time to graze.

Dugongs are mammals and are sometimes called sea cows.

