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TITLE: Evidence of the occurrence of a large dugong in the Red Sea, Egypt

AUTHOR: ['Ahmed M. Shawky']

ABSTRACT:

Three feeding trails of a large dugong with a width of 30 cm were recorded at 11 m depth at Marsa Hermez off the Egyptian Red Sea coast (25.321° N and 34.744° E) on the 23rd January 2019. Additionally, four other feeding trails (with widths of 6 cm, 15 cm, 20 cm and 25 cm) were also noted within the seagrass patches. The small size of a trail beside a larger one suggests the presence of calf with mother. Thus, the present results demonstrate indirect evidence for the existence of a large female dugong in the Red Sea. The present study documents the presence of female dugongs with calves in a key habitat, which is important for dugong conservation in Egypt.

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