# Same-sex flamingo pair become parents at Paignton Zoo



Paignton Zoo in Devon has reported that a pair of male flamingos, Curtis and Arthur, have become parents after adopting an abandoned egg and successfully raising the chick. This marks a significant achievement as it is one of the first flamingo chicks hatched at the zoo since 2018.

The zoo has been chronicling the breeding activities of their flamingos through a social media initiative called 'Love Lagoon'. This project provides regular updates on the flamingos’ breeding progress, aiming to engage the public and document the behaviours of these captivating birds closely.

Peter Smallbones, a representative from Paignton Zoo, commented on the same-sex parenting phenomenon seen in Curtis and Arthur. "Regarding the same-sex parenting, we aren’t entirely sure how this came about, although it is a known phenomenon in Chilean flamingos, as well as other bird flocks," he stated. Smallbones explained that the most plausible explanation is that the egg was originally abandoned by another couple, and Curtis and Arthur subsequently adopted it. The success of this adoption has been positively received by the zoo staff, especially within the context of their current breeding programme.

The breeding programme at Paignton Zoo is part of a broader conservation effort aimed at aiding the population of Chilean flamingos, which are currently classified as near threatened. These birds have faced notable population declines in recent years due to various human activities. Egg harvesting disturbances caused by tourism and habitat degradation from mining have significantly impacted the Chilean flamingo populations.

Paignton Zoo's ongoing efforts to support the breeding of Chilean flamingos play a crucial role in the conservation of these birds. The successful parenting by Curtis and Arthur is seen as a positive indicator for the zoo's breeding programme, reflecting both natural adaptability in this flamingo species and the supportive environment provided by the zoo team.