

# **Wildlife Exposure Factors Handbook**

**Volume I of II**

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**WILDLIFE EXPOSURE FACTORS  
HANDBOOK**

**Volume I of II**

**Office of Health and Environmental Assessment  
Office of Research and Development  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Washington, DC 20460**

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Washington, DC 20460**

## **DISCLAIMER**

**This document has been reviewed in accordance with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency policy and approved for publication. Mention of trade names or commercial products does not constitute endorsement or recommendation for use.**

## **FOREWORD**

**The Exposure Assessment Group (EAG) of EPA's Office of Research and Development has three main functions: (1) to conduct human health and ecological exposure and risk assessments, (2) to review exposure and risk assessments and related documents, and (3) to develop guidelines and handbooks for use in these assessments. The activities under each of these functions are supported by and respond to the needs of the various program offices, regional offices, and the technical community.**

**The Wildlife Exposure Factors Handbook was produced in response to the increased interest in assessing risks to ecological systems. Its purpose is to improve exposure assessments for wildlife and support the quantification of risk estimates. It is a companion document to the Exposure Factors Handbook, which contains information useful for quantifying exposure to humans. Because information and methods for estimating exposure are continually improving, we will revise these handbooks as necessary in the future.**

**Michael A. Callahan  
Director  
Exposure Assessment Group**

## **PREFACE**

The Exposure Assessment Group of the Office of Health and Environmental Assessment (OHEA) has prepared the Wildlife Exposure Handbook in support of the Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response and the Office of Water. The Handbook provides information on various factors used to assess exposure to wildlife. The goals of the project are (1) to promote the application of risk assessment methods to wildlife species, (2) to foster a consistent approach to wildlife exposure and risk assessments, and (3) to increase the accessibility of the literature applicable to these assessments.

The bulk of the document summarizes literature values for exposure factors for 34 species of birds, mammals, amphibians, and reptiles. In addition, we include a chapter on allometric equations that can be used to estimate some of the exposure factors when data are lacking. Finally, we describe some common equations used to estimate exposure. The basic literature search was completed in May 1990 and was supplemented by targeted searches conducted in 1992.

We anticipate updating this Handbook and would appreciate any assistance in identifying additional sources of information that fill data gaps or otherwise improve the Handbook. Comments can be sent to:

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

The Wildlife Exposure Factors Handbook (hereafter referred to as the Handbook) provides data, references, and guidance for conducting exposure assessments for wildlife species exposed to toxic chemicals in their environment. It is the product of a joint effort by EPA's Office of Research and Development (ORD), Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response (OSWER), and Office of Water (OW). The goals of this Handbook are (1) to promote the application of risk assessment methods to wildlife species, (2) to foster a consistent approach to wildlife exposure and risk assessments, and (3) to increase the accessibility of the literature applicable to these assessments.

## 1.1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of the Handbook is to provide a convenient source of information and an analytic framework for screening-level risk assessments for common wildlife species. These screening-level risk assessments may be used for several purposes, including: to assess potential effects of environmental contamination on wildlife species and to support site-specific decisions (e.g., for hazardous waste sites); to support the development of water-quality or other media-specific criteria for limiting environmental levels of toxic substances to protect wildlife species; or to focus research and monitoring efforts. The Handbook provides data (analogous to EPA's *Exposure Factors Handbook* for humans, USEPA, 1989c) and methods for estimating wildlife intakes or doses of environmental contaminants. Although the data presented in the Handbook can be used for screening analyses, we recommend that anyone establishing a cleanup goal or criterion on the basis of values contained herein *obtain the original literature on which the values are based to confirm that the study quality is sufficient to support the criterion*. This Handbook does not include data or extrapolation methods required to assess the toxicity of substances to wildlife species, nor does it include any chemical-specific data (e.g., bioavailability factors).

For the Office of Water, data gathered for the Handbook were used to identify wildlife species that are likely to be at greater risk from bioaccumulative pollutants in surface waters and to estimate likely exposures for these species. Data on diets and on

food and water ingestion rates can be used with chemical-specific information, such as bioaccumulation potential and wildlife toxicity, to calculate site- or region-specific concentrations of a chemical in water (or soil or sediment) that are unlikely to cause adverse effects.

For the Superfund program, this Handbook supplements the existing environmental evaluation guidance. EPA's *Risk Assessment Guidance for Superfund: Volume II-- Environmental Evaluation Manual* (U.S. EPA, 1989a) provides an overview of ecological assessment in the Superfund process. It includes a description of the statutory and regulatory bases for ecological assessments in Superfund and fundamental concepts for understanding ecological effects of environmental contaminants. The *Environmental Evaluation Manual* also reviews elements of planning an ecological assessment and how to organize and present the results of the assessment. EPA's *Ecological Assessment of Hazardous Waste Sites: A Field and Laboratory Reference* (U.S. EPA, 1989b) and *Evaluation of Terrestrial Indicators for Use in Ecological Assessments at Hazardous Waste Sites* (U.S. EPA, 1992) are companion documents that describe biological assessment strategies, field sampling designs, toxicity tests, biomarkers, biological field assessments, and data interpretation. The *ECO Update* intermittent bulletin series (published by EPA's Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response, publication no. 9345.0-05I, available from the National Technical Information Service, Springfield, Virginia) provides supplemental guidance for Superfund on selected issues. Although these documents have identified decreases in wildlife populations as potential endpoints for ecological assessments, they do not provide guidance on how to conduct a wildlife exposure assessment that is comparable to the guidance provided by the Superfund program for human health exposure assessments. This Handbook provides both guidance and data to facilitate estimating wildlife exposure to contaminants in the environment.

Exposure assessments for wildlife and humans differ in several important ways. One key distinction is that many different wildlife species may be exposed, as compared with a single species of concern for a human health assessment. Exposure varies between different species and even between different populations of the same species; behavioral attributes and diet and habitat preferences influence this variation. Second, whereas it is

seldom possible to confirm estimated levels of human exposure without invasive sampling of human tissues, confirmatory sampling for many chemicals can be done in wildlife species (protected species excepted). However, the tissue sampling required to quantify actual exposure levels can be costly, and interpretation of tissue concentrations can be complex.

For both human health and wildlife exposure assessments, the most cost-effective approach is often to first screen for potentially significant exposures using measures (or estimates) of environmental contamination (e.g., in soils, water, prey species) to estimate contaminant intakes or doses by significant routes of exposure. If estimated doses fall far below the toxicity values associated with adverse effects, especially from chronic exposures, further assessment may be unnecessary. If estimated doses far exceed reference toxicity values, it may be possible to determine appropriate actions on the basis of these estimates alone. When a screening-level exposure assessment indicates that adverse effects are likely, additional confirmatory data may be needed in the decision-making process. For humans, it is usually not practicable to obtain additional types of data (e.g., tissue concentrations, biomarkers), and human exposure estimates are often refined by using more site-specific data for exposure parameters. For wildlife, confirmatory data may be obtained from chemical analyses of tissue samples from potentially exposed wildlife or their prey and from observed incidence of disease, reproductive failure, or death in exposed wildlife. These are reviewed in EPA's field and laboratory reference and terrestrial indicators documents described above (EPA, 1989b, 1992). If this more direct approach is not possible, the exposure analysis can be refined on the basis of more site-specific data for the species of concern.

Wildlife can be exposed to environmental contaminants through inhalation, dermal contact with contaminated water or soil, or ingestion of contaminated food, water, or soil. Exposure assessment seeks to answer several questions, including:

- What organisms are actually or potentially exposed to contaminants?

- Which organisms or life stages might be most vulnerable to environmental contaminants (e.g., ingest the largest quantities of contaminated media relative to body size)?
- What are the significant routes of exposure?
- To what amounts of each contaminant are organisms actually or potentially exposed?
- How long is each exposure?
- How often does or will exposure to the environmental contaminants take place?
- What seasonal and climatic variations in conditions are likely to affect exposure?
- What are the site-specific geophysical, physical, and chemical conditions affecting exposure?

The parameters for which data are presented in the Handbook are intended to help a risk assessor answer these questions. The population parameter data (e.g., birth and death rates) may be useful for placing estimates of risks to wildlife populations in a broader ecological context and for planning monitoring activities.

This Handbook focuses on selected groups of mammals, birds, amphibians, and reptiles. Fish and aquatic or terrestrial invertebrates were not included in this effort. The profiles on amphibians and reptiles are, in general, less developed than those for birds and mammals. We emphasized birds and mammals because methods for assessing their exposure are more common and well developed. As more assessments are done for amphibians and reptiles, we anticipate that additional methods and supporting factors will be necessary. Until then, we hope the information presented here will encourage assessors to begin considering and quantifying their exposure.

For all exposure parameters and species in the Handbook, we try to present data indicative of the range of values that different populations of a species may assume across North America. For site-specific ecological risk assessments, it is important to note that the values for exposure factors presented in this Handbook may not accurately represent

specific local populations. The species included in the Handbook have broad geographic ranges, and they may exhibit different values for many of the exposure factors in different portions of their range. Some species exhibit geographic variation in body size, survival, and reproduction. Breeding and migration also influence exposure. Site-specific values for these parameters can be determined more accurately using published studies of local populations and assistance from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, state departments of fish and game, and organizations such as local Audubon Society chapters. In addition, The Nature Conservancy develops and maintains wildlife databases (including endangered species) in cooperation with all 50 states. Local information increases the certainty of a risk assessment. Thus, for site-specific assessments, we strongly recommend contacting local wildlife experts to determine the presence and characteristics of species of concern.

Finally, we do not intend to imply that risk assessments for wildlife should be restricted to the species described in this Handbook, or should always be conducted for these species. We emphasize that locally important or rare species not included in this Handbook may still be very important for site-specific risk assessments. To assist users who wish to evaluate other species, we list general references for birds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians in North America. The Handbook also provides allometric equations to assist in extrapolating exposure factors (e.g., water ingestion rate, surface area) to closely related species on the basis of body size.

## **1.2. ORGANIZATION OF THE HANDBOOK**

The Handbook is organized into four chapters. The remainder of this chapter provides an overview of the species and exposure factors included in the Handbook and discusses the literature search strategy used to identify factors. Chapter 2 presents exposure profiles for the selected species (described in greater detail below). Chapter 3 provides allometric models that may be used to estimate food and water ingestion rates, inhalation rates, surface areas, and metabolic rates for wildlife species on the basis of body size. Chapter 4 describes common equations used to estimate wildlife exposure to environmental contaminants. Included are methods for estimating diet-specific food



ingestion rates on the basis of metabolic rate and for estimating exposure to chemicals in soil and sediment.

Chapter 2 is the core of the Handbook; it presents exposure profiles for selected birds (Section 2.1), mammals (Section 2.2), and reptiles and amphibians (Section 2.3), along with brief descriptions of their natural history. Each species profile includes an introduction to the species' general taxonomic group, qualitative description of the species, list of similar species, table of exposure factors, and reference list (which also covers that species' section in Volume II, the Appendix). The values included in the exposure factors tables are a subset of those we found in the literature and also include values that we estimated using the allometric equations presented in Chapter 3. We selected values for the tables in Chapter 2 based on a variety of factors including sample size, quantification of variability (e.g., standard deviations, standard errors, ranges), relevance of the measurement technique for exposure assessment, and coverage of habitats, subspecies, and the variability seen in the literature. A complete listing of the parameter values identified in our literature survey is provided in the Appendix. The Appendix also includes more details concerning sample size, methods, and qualifying information than the species profiles. Users are encouraged to consult the Appendix to select the most appropriate values for their particular assessment.

The remainder of this introductory chapter describes the species and exposure factors covered in the Handbook in greater detail. The literature search strategy is discussed in Section 1.6.

### **1.3. LIST OF SELECTED SPECIES**

Wildlife species were selected for the Handbook to provide several types of coverage:

- Major taxonomic groups (major vertebrate groups, orders, and families);
- A range of diets (e.g., piscivore, probing insectivore) likely to result in contact with contaminated environmental media;

- A variety of habitat types (e.g., fields, marshes, woodlands, coastal areas); and
- Small to large body sizes.

Other attributes also were considered when selecting species for the Handbook, including:

- Species with wide geographic distribution within the United States (or replaced regionally by similar species);
- Species of concern to EPA or other regulatory agencies (managed by state or Federal agencies); and
- Species of societal significance (familiar or of concern to most people).

Tables 1-1, 1-2, and 1-3 list the birds, mammals, and reptiles and amphibians, respectively, included in the Handbook. The species are listed according to diet, general foraging habitat, and relative body size.

The species included in this Handbook were necessarily limited; *however, we do not recommend limiting wildlife exposure assessments to the species or similar species identified in the Handbook.* Instead, the Handbook should be used as a framework to guide development of exposure factors and assessments for species of concern in a risk assessment. Species selection criteria for site-specific risk assessments might include the following considerations:

- Species that play important roles in community structure or function (e.g., top predators or major herbivores);
- Diet, habitat preferences, and behaviors that make the species likely to contact the stressor;
- Species from different taxa that might exhibit different toxic effects from contaminants;
- Local species that are of concern to Federal and state regulatory agencies (e.g., endangered and threatened species);

Table 1-1. Characteristics of Selected Birds

Diet	General Foraging Habitat	Body Size	Selected Bird Species
<b>Insectivore<sup>a</sup></b> probing/soil-dwelling invertebrates gleaning/insects	woodlands, marshes marshes	medium small	American woodcock marsh wren
<b>Herbivore</b> gleaning/seeds grazing/shoots	woodlands, fields and brush open fields	medium large	northern bobwhite Canada goose
<b>Omnivore</b>	open woodland, suburbs	small	American robin
<b>Carnivore<sup>b</sup></b>	open fields, forest edge most open areas	medium medium	American kestrel red-tailed hawk
<b>Carnivore/Piscivore/Scavenger</b> small birds & mammals/fish/dead fish fish/invertebrates/small birds/garbage	open water bodies Great Lakes and coastal	large medium	bald eagle herring gull
<b>Piscivore<sup>c</sup></b>	most streams, rivers, small lakes most freshwater and saltwater bodies large water bodies	medium large large	belted kingfisher great blue heron osprey
<b>Aquatic Insectivore<sup>d</sup></b> probing/soil-dwelling invertebrates diving/aquatic invertebrates	most rivers and streams oceans and coastal areas	small medium	spotted sandpiper lesser scaup
<b>Aquatic Herbivore/Insectivore</b>	most wetlands, ponds	medium	mallard

<sup>a</sup>Includes consumption of insects, other arthropods, worms, and other terrestrial invertebrates.

<sup>b</sup>Includes consumption of terrestrial vertebrates and large invertebrates.

<sup>c</sup>Includes consumption of fish, amphibians, crustaceans, and other larger aquatic animals.

<sup>d</sup>Includes consumption of aquatic invertebrates and amphibian larvae by gleaning or probing.

**Table 1-2. Characteristics of Selected Mammals**

<b>Diet</b>	<b>General Foraging Habitat</b>	<b>Body Size</b>	<b>Selected Mammal Species</b>
<b>Insectivore<sup>a</sup> gleaning/surface-dwelling invertebrates</b>	<b>most habitat types</b>	<b>small</b>	<b>short-tailed shrew</b>
<b>Herbivore gleaning/seeds grazing or browsing/shoots, roots, or leaves</b>	<b>most dry-land habitats grassy fields, marshes, bogs prairie grass communities most habitat types</b>	<b>small small small medium</b>	<b>deer mouse meadow vole prairie vole eastern cottontail</b>
<b>Omnivore</b>	<b>woodlands, suburbs mixed woodlands and open areas</b>	<b>medium medium</b>	<b>raccoon red fox</b>
<b>Carnivore<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>most areas near water</b>	<b>medium</b>	<b>mink</b>
<b>Piscivore<sup>c</sup></b>	<b>rivers coastal, estuaries, lakes</b>	<b>medium medium</b>	<b>river otter harbor seal</b>
<b>Aquatic Herbivore</b>	<b>most aquatic habitats</b>	<b>medium</b>	<b>muskrat</b>

<sup>a</sup>Includes consumption of insects, other arthropods, worms, and other terrestrial invertebrates.

<sup>b</sup>Includes consumption of aquatic and terrestrial vertebrates and large invertebrates.

<sup>c</sup>Includes consumption of fish, amphibians, crustaceans, molluscs, and other large aquatic animals.

**Table 1-3. Characteristics of Selected Reptiles and Amphibians**

<b>Adult Diet</b>	<b>General Foraging Habitat for Adults</b>	<b>Body Size</b>	<b>Selected Reptile or Amphibian Species</b>
<b>REPTILES</b>			
<b>Terrestrial Carnivore<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>open woods, fields and brush</b>	<b>medium</b>	<b>racer</b>
<b>Aquatic Piscivore<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>most types of water bodies</b>	<b>medium</b>	<b>northern water snake</b>
<b>Omnivore</b>	<b>open fields, forest edge, marshes</b>	<b>medium</b>	<b>eastern box turtle</b>
	<b>most freshwater bodies</b>	<b>large</b>	<b>snapping turtle</b>
<b>Aquatic Herbivore</b>	<b>most wetlands, ponds</b>	<b>medium</b>	<b>painter turtle</b>
<b>AMPHIBIANS</b>			
<b>Insectivore<sup>c</sup></b>	<b>shallow freshwater bodies</b>	<b>small</b>	<b>green frog</b>
<b>Aquatic Piscivore/Insectivore<sup>d</sup></b>	<b>lakes, ponds, bogs, streams</b>	<b>medium</b>	<b>bullfrog</b>
	<b>small lakes, ponds, streams</b>	<b>small</b>	<b>eastern newt</b>

<sup>a</sup>Includes consumption of terrestrial vertebrates and invertebrates, insects, other arthropods, worms, and other terrestrial invertebrates.

<sup>b</sup>Includes consumption of fish, amphibians, and crustaceans.

<sup>c</sup>Includes consumption of insects, other arthropods, worms, and other terrestrial invertebrates.

<sup>d</sup>Includes consumption of fish, amphibians, crustaceans, molluscs, other aquatic animals, and terrestrial insects and other invertebrates.

- **Species of societal significance or concern (e.g., game species, familiar species); and**
- **Species that have been shown to be particularly sensitive to the stressor being addressed.**

**When species of concern for a risk assessment include species for which data are presented in this Handbook, it can serve as a readily available source of data for screening-level exposure analyses.**

## **1.4. LIST OF EXPOSURE FACTORS**

**Three routes of exposure may be of concern for wildlife in the vicinity of contaminated surface waters and terrestrial habitats: oral, inhalation, and dermal. Oral exposures might occur via ingestion of contaminated food (e.g., aquatic prey) or water or incidental ingestion of contaminated media (e.g., soils, sediments) during foraging or other activities. Inhalation of gases or particulates might be a significant route of exposure for some animals. Dermal exposures are likely to be most significant for burrowing mammals (i.e., via contact with contaminated soils) and animals that spend considerable amounts of time submerged in surface waters. This Handbook tabulates selected data for all three routes of exposure (Table 1-4), emphasizing oral exposures. It also provides quantitative information on population parameters and qualitative information related to seasonal activities, geographic ranges, habitats, and other life-history characteristics.**

**The exposure factors presented in the Handbook are conceptually separated into four types: normalizing factors (Section 1.4.1), contact rates (Section 1.4.2), population dynamics (Section 1.4.3), and seasonal activities (Section 1.4.4). Section 1.5 describes the format in which values for these exposure factors are presented in Chapter 2.**

### **1.4.1. Normalizing Factors**

**Normalizing factors include body weight, growth rate, and metabolic rate, which are discussed in turn below.**

**Table 1-4. Wildlife Exposure Factors Included in the Handbook**

<b>Parameter Type</b>	<b>Exposure Route/ Factor Category</b>	<b>Factor</b>
<b>NORMALIZING FACTORS</b>	<b>Body Weight</b>	body weight
		growth rate
	<b>Metabolic Rate</b>	metabolic rate
<b>CONTACT RATES</b>	<b>Oral</b>	food ingestion rate
		dietary composition
		water ingestion rate
		soil/sediment intake rate
	<b>Inhalation</b>	inhalation rate
	<b>Dermal</b>	surface area
<b>POPULATION DYNAMICS</b>	<b>Distribution (by life stage and season)</b>	social organization
		home range size
		population density
	<b>Birth, Maturation, and Death Rates</b>	annual fecundity
		age at sexual maturity
		annual mortality rates
		average longevity
<b>SEASONAL ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>Timing of Activities (those that can modify habitat preferences and exposure)</b>	mating season
		parturition/hatching
		molt/metamorphosis
		dispersal/migration/hibernation

#### **1.4.1.1. *Body Weight***

Body weights (in units of mass) are reported as fresh weight as might be obtained by weighing a live animal in the field. Several of the contact rate parameters are normalized to body weight. For example, both food and water ingestion rates are reported on a per body weight basis (e.g., gram of fresh food or water per gram of fresh body weight per day). Using empirical models, body weight data also were used to estimate contact rate parameters for which we could not find measured values.

Adult body weights are listed for all species. For birds, we also provide egg weight, weight at hatching, nestling or chick weights, and weight at fledging, when available, to assist risk assessors concerned with estimating exposures of embryos and young birds. For mammals, we also provide gestating female weight, birth weight, pup weights at various ages, weight at weaning, and weight at sexual maturity, when available, for a similar purpose. Finally, for reptiles and amphibians, we also provide egg weight, larval or juvenile weights with age, and weight at metamorphosis, if available and applicable. Body size for reptiles and amphibians is often reported as body length instead of body weight, so we also provide data on body length and the relationship between body length and body weight, when available.

#### **1.4.1.2. *Growth Rate***

Young animals generally consume more food (per unit body weight) than adults because they grow and develop rapidly. Growth rates change as animals mature, whether expressed as absolute (g/day) or relative (percent body weight) terms. Weight gain is rapid after birth, but slows over time. Different types of animals exhibit different patterns of growth over time. Plots of body weight versus age for some animal groups are sigmoidal whereas others may approximate logistic functions or other shapes. As a result, investigators often report growth rates as various constants associated with particular mathematical models (e.g., Gompertz equation, von Bertalanffy equation; see Peters, 1983) that fit the growth pattern for a given species. Instead of presenting a variety of growth constants and models, however, we report growth rates for young animals, when available,



in grams per day for specific age groups. Growth rates also can be inferred from a series of juvenile body weights with age. These measures are included under body weight (see Section 1.4.1.1).

#### **1.4.1.3. *Metabolic Rate***

Metabolic rate is reported on the basis of kilocalories per day normalized to body weight (e.g., kcal/kg-day). If metabolic rate was measured and reported on the basis of oxygen consumption only, we provide those values as liters O<sub>2</sub>/kg-day. Normalized metabolic rates based on kilocalories can be used to estimate normalized food ingestion rates (see Section 4.1.2). Metabolic rates based on oxygen consumption can be used to estimate metabolic rates based on kilocalories for subsequent use in estimating food ingestion rates (see Section 3.6.3.1).

### **1.4.2. Contact Rate Factors**

Table 1-5 summarizes the six contact rate factors included for the oral, inhalation, and dermal routes of exposure.

#### **1.4.2.1. *Oral Route***

Three environmental media are the primary contributors to wildlife exposure by the oral route: food, water, and soils and sediments. Four contact rate exposure parameters related to these three exposure media are discussed below.

**1.4.2.1.1. *Food ingestion rates.*** Food ingestion rates are expressed in this Handbook as grams of food (wet weight) per gram of body weight (wet weight) per day (g/g-day). Food ingestion rates can vary by age, size, and sex and by seasonal changes in ambient temperature, activity levels, reproductive activities, and the type of diet consumed. Food ingestion rates have not been measured for many wildlife species. Methods for estimating food ingestion rates on the basis of free-living (or field) metabolic rate, energy content of the diet, and assimilation efficiency are discussed in Section 4.1.2.

**Table 1-5. Wildlife Contact Rate Exposure Factors**

<b>Exposure Route</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Factor</b>	<b>Expression</b>	<b>Units</b>
<b>ORAL</b>	<b>Food</b>	<b>ingestion rate</b>	<b>fraction body weight</b>	<b>6 g/g-day</b>
		<b>dietary composition</b>	<b>fraction of total intake represented by each food type</b>	
	<b>Water</b>	<b>ingestion rate</b>	<b>fraction body weight</b>	<b>g/g-day</b>
	<b>Soil/Sediment</b>	<b>intake rate</b>	<b>fraction of total food intake</b>	<b>g/g-day</b>
<b>INHALATION</b>	<b>Vapor or Particulates</b>	<b>inhalation rate</b>	<b>daily volume</b>	<b>m<sup>3</sup>/day</b>
<b>DERMAL</b>	<b>Water or Soil/Sediment</b>	<b>surface area</b>	<b>total area potentially exposed<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>cm<sup>2</sup></b>

<sup>a</sup>Total unprotected or permeable surface area that might be exposed under some circumstances (e.g., dust bathing), even though it would not be exposed under other conditions (e.g., swimming with a trapped air layer between the feathers or fur and skin).

**1.4.2.1.2. Dietary composition.** Dietary composition varies seasonally and by age, size, reproductive status, and habitat. Dietary composition (e.g., proportion of diet consisting of various plant or animal materials), often measured by stomach-content analyses, is expressed whenever possible as percentage of total intake on a wet-weight basis. This convention facilitates comparison with contaminant concentrations in dietary items reported on a wet-weight basis. Methods for converting other measures of dietary composition (e.g., percentage of total prey items captured, proportion of intake on a dry-weight basis) to estimates of dietary intake on a wet-weight basis are provided in Section 4.1.2.

**1.4.2.1.3. Water ingestion rates.** For drinking-water exposures, ingestion rates are expressed in this Handbook as grams of water per gram of wet body weight per day (g/g-day). Water consumption rates depend on body weight, physiological adaptations,

diet, temperature, and activity levels. It is important to remember that, under some conditions, some species can meet their water requirements with only the water contained in the diet and metabolic water production (see Section 3.2).

**1.4.2.1.4. *Incidental soil and sediment intakes.*** Wildlife can incidentally ingest soils or sediments while foraging or during other activities such as dust bathing and preening or grooming. Data quantifying soil and sediment ingestion are limited; we present available values for selected species in Section 4.1.3.

#### **1.4.2.2. *Inhalation Route***

Average daily inhalation rates are reported in the Handbook in units of m<sup>3</sup>/day. Inhalation rates vary with size, seasonal activity levels, ambient temperature, and daily activities. EPA's current approach to calculating inhalation exposures requires additional information on species' respiratory physiology to fully estimate inhalation exposures (see Section 4.1.4).

#### **1.4.2.3. *Dermal Route***

Dermal contact with contaminated soil, sediment, or water is likely to be an exposure pathway for some wildlife species. An animal's surface area could be used to estimate the potential for uptake of contaminants through its skin. For some exposures (e.g., dust bathing), the entire surface area of the animal might be important. For other types (e.g., swimming), only the uninsulated portions (e.g., no fur or feathers that create a trapped air layer) of the animal might contact the contaminated medium. In the Handbook, we provide measures or estimates of the entire potentially exposed surface area of an animal, when possible. We have not attempted to determine what portions would be exposed and protected for swimming animals.

### **1.4.3. Population Dynamics**

Several parameters can be used to describe the spatial distribution and abundance of a population of animals in relation to the spatial extent of contamination. Three parameters related to spatial distribution are social organization, home-range size, and population density. These are important for estimating the number of individuals or proportion of a population that might be exposed to a contaminated area. Parameters related to population size and persistence include age at sexual maturity and maturation, mortality, and annual fecundity rates. These parameters may be useful to assessors planning or evaluating field studies or monitoring programs.

#### ***1.4.3.1. Social Organization***

The Handbook includes a qualitative description of each species' social organization, which influences how animals of various ages and sizes are distributed in space. In some species, individual home ranges do not overlap. In others, all individuals use the same home range. In between these extremes, home ranges can be shared with mates, offspring, or extended family groups.

Social organization can vary substantially among species that appear otherwise similar; therefore, it is not possible to extrapolate the social organization of similar species from the selected species in this Handbook. Consult the general bibliographies for information sources to determine the social organization of species not covered in the Handbook.

#### ***1.4.3.2. Home Range/Territory Size/Foraging Radius***

Home range size can be used to determine the proportion of time that an individual animal is expected to contact contaminated environmental media. Home range is defined as the geographic area encompassed by an animal's activities (except migration) over a specified time. While home range values often are expressed in units of area, for species dependent on riparian or coastal habitats, a more meaningful measure can be foraging

radius, or the distances the animals are willing to travel to potential food sources. Although home ranges may be roughly circular in homogeneous habitats, it is important to remember that depending on habitat needs and conditions, home ranges may be irregular in shape. The size and spatial attributes of a home range often are defined by foraging activities, but also might depend on the location of specific resources such as dens or nest sites in other areas. An animal might not visit all areas of its home range every day or even every week, but over longer time periods, it can be expected to visit most of the areas within the home range that contain needed resources such as forage, prey, or protected resting areas.

Home range size for individuals within a population can vary with season, latitude, or altitude as a consequence of changes in the distribution and abundance of food or other resources. It generally varies with animal body size and age because of differences in the distribution of preferred forage or prey. It can also depend on habitat quality, increasing as habitat quality decreases to a condition beyond which the habitat does not sustain even sparse populations. Finally, home ranges can vary by sex and season. For example, if a female is responsible for most or all of the feeding of young, her foraging range might be restricted to an area close to her nest or den when she has dependent young, whereas the foraging range of males would not be so restricted.

Nonterritorial species may allow significant overlap of activity areas among neighboring individuals or groups. For example, several individuals or mated pairs may share the same area, although signalling behaviors may ensure temporal segregation. For these species, we report a home range size or foraging radius. Other species are strongly territorial and defend mutually exclusive areas: individuals, breeding pairs, or family units actively advertise identifiable boundaries and exclude neighboring individuals or groups. Foraging activities are usually restricted to the defended territories. For these species, we report the size of the defended territory and note whether foraging occurs outside of the territory.

#### ***1.4.3.3. Population Density***

Population density (the number of animals per unit area) influences how many individuals (or what proportion of a local population) might be exposed within a contaminated area. For strongly territorial species, population density can be inferred from territory size in many cases. For species with overlapping home ranges, particularly colonially breeding animals (e.g., most seabirds), population density cannot be inferred from home range size.

#### ***1.4.3.4. Annual Fecundity***

Attributes related to the number of offspring produced each year that reach sexual maturity (annual fecundity) are measured in different ways depending on the life history of the species. For birds, data are generally available for clutch size, number of clutches per year, nest success (generally reflecting predation pressure), number of young fledged per successful nest (generally reflecting food availability), and number of young fledged per active nest (reflecting all causes of mortality). For mammals, litter size in wild populations often is determined by placental scars or embryo counts, and the number of young surviving to weaning is seldom known. For reptiles that lay eggs, clutch size and percent hatching can be measured in the field. For viviparous reptiles, we report the number born in a litter. For amphibians, egg masses may include thousands of eggs, but these are seldom counted.

#### ***1.4.3.5. Annual Mortality and Longevity***

Longevity can influence the potential for cumulative deleterious effects and the appropriate averaging times for chronic exposures. For birds, annual adult mortality tends to be constant. For large mammalian species, however, annual adult mortality tends to be constant for several years, and then increases rapidly with age. For reptiles and amphibians, annual adult mortality can decrease with age for some time as the animals continue to grow larger and become less susceptible to predation. In the Handbook, we

report annual mortality rates by age category and typical or mean and maximum longevities, when possible.

#### **1.4.4. Seasonal Activities**

Many life-cycle attributes affect an animal's activity and foraging patterns in time and space. For example, many species of birds are present in the northern hemisphere only during the warmer months or move seasonally between the northern and southern parts of North America. Some species of mammals, reptiles, and amphibians hibernate or spend a dormant period in a burrow or den during the winter months. The species profiles describe these and other seasonal activity patterns that can influence exposure frequency and duration.

For each species, we summarize information on the seasonal occurrence of several activities including breeding, molting, migration, dispersal, and occurrence of dormancy/denning (if applicable). Deposition and utilization of fat reserves are discussed where information is available. Trends in these factors with latitude are identified.

### **1.5. DATA PRESENTATION FORMAT**

Species-specific values for the exposure factors are presented in Chapter 2. Quantitative data for each species are presented in tables arranged in four main sections:

- Normalizing and Contact Rate Factors;
- Dietary Composition;
- Population Dynamics; and
- Seasonal Activities.

The parameter values and units used for each exposure factor are described in the remainder of this section. In the species profiles and in the Appendix, all values are identified as measured or estimated, and references are provided.

### 1.5.1. Normalizing and Contact Rate Factors

Normalizing and contact rate factors are presented under the heading "Factors" in Chapter 2. Several of them apply to all animals included in the Handbook, whereas some apply only to specific groups, as described in Sections 1.5.1.1 through 1.5.1.4. The column headers for these factors are explained in Table 1-6.

Table 1-6. Column Headers for Tables of Normalizing and Contact Rate Factors

<b>Age/Sex/ Cond./Seas.</b>	Age (e.g., A for adult, J for juvenile) Sex (e.g., M for male, F for female) Condition (e.g., I for incubating, NB for nonbreeding) Season (e.g., SP for spring, SU for summer).  [Note: Only information needed to correctly interpret the value is included.]
<b>Mean</b>	Mean value for population sampled $\pm$ standard deviation (SD), if reported. If SD is not reported, mean value for population sampled $\pm$ standard error (SE) of the mean, if reported. For some studies, a range of typical values may be presented instead of a mean value (check the notes).
<b>Range or (95% CI of Mean)</b>	Range of values reported for the population sampled, or (95th percent confidence interval of the mean value).
<b>Location (subspecies)</b>	State(s) or province(s) in which the study was conducted (subspecies studied, if reported).
<b>Reference</b>	Reference for study.
<b>Note No.</b>	Footnote number.

#### 1.5.1.1. All Animals

**Body weight (grams or kilograms)**

Measured values only. Although we use the term weight, all data are presented in units of mass. The age and sex of the animal are specified as appropriate, and



	weights may include age-weight series for young animals.
Metabolic rate (liters O <sub>2</sub> /kg-day)	Included only if measured values were available. These data can be used to estimate metabolic rate on a kcal basis.
Metabolic rate (kcal/kg-day)	Measured or estimated basal and free-living (or field) metabolic rates. Most of the free-living values were estimated from body weight using an appropriate allometric equation.
Food ingestion rate (g/g-day)	Measured on a wet-weight basis. For birds and mammals, values measured in captivity are generally lower than for free-ranging animals. For reptiles and amphibians, food ingestion rates can be higher in captivity than in the field. Food ingestion rates can also be different in captivity than in the wild if the diet differs substantially from that consumed in the wild (e.g., dry laboratory chow has a substantially lower water content than most natural diets).
Water ingestion rate (g/g-day)	Most of these values were estimated from body weight using an allometric equation.
Sediment/soil ingestion rate	These values are not presented in the individual species profiles in Chapter 2; instead, the limited data available for soil/sediment ingestion rates (as percent soil or sediment in diet on a dry weight basis) for selected species are presented in Section 4.1.3.
Inhalation rate (m <sup>3</sup> /day)	Note that this value is not normalized to body weight, but is the total volume inhaled each day. Most values were estimated from body weight using an appropriate allometric equation.
Surface area (cm <sup>2</sup> )	Most values were estimated from body weight using an appropriate allometric equation.
<b>1.5.1.2. Birds</b>	
Egg weight (grams)	Included only if measured values were available.
Weight at hatching (grams)	Included only if measured values were available.

**Chick or nestling growth rate (g/day)**                      **Included only if measured values were available. The ages to which the growth rate applies are indicated.**

**Weight at fledging (grams)**                      **Included only if measured values were available.**

**1.5.1.3. *Mammals***

**Neonate weight (grams)**                      **Included only if measured values were available.**

**Pup growth rate (g/day)**                      **Included only if measured values were available. The ages to which the growth rate applies are indicated.**

**Weight at weaning (grams)**                      **Included only if measured values were available.**

**1.5.1.4. *Reptiles and Amphibians***

**Body length (mm)**                      **Length is the most common measure of size and growth rate reported for reptiles and amphibians. Body length-weight relationships are reported whenever possible. Data for snakes include snout-to-vent lengths (SVL) and total lengths; for frogs, SVLs only; and for turtles, carapace (dorsal shell) and plastron (ventral shell) lengths.**

**Egg weight (grams)**                      **Included only if measured values were available.**

**Weight at hatching (grams)**                      **Included only if measured values were available.**

**Juvenile growth rate (g/day)**                      **Included only if measured values were available. The ages to which the growth rate applies are indicated.**

**Tadpole weight (grams)**                      **For frogs only; included only if measured values were available.**

**Larval or eft weight (grams)**                      **For newts only; included only if measured values were available.**

## 1.5.2. Dietary Composition

### 1.5.2.1. All Animals

The diet of all animals is separated by season whenever possible. Up to three months of data were combined for each of the four seasons, provided the animals were in the same location and habitat during the 3-month period (Table 1-7). The diet components are listed in the first column shaded in grey. The measure of dietary composition is enclosed in parentheses under the "Location (subspecies)/Habitat (measure)" column header.

Table 1-7. Column Headers for Tables on Dietary Composition

<b>Dietary Composition</b>	<b>List of food types.</b>
<b>Spring</b>	<b>Dietary composition during spring (March, April, May).</b>
<b>Summer</b>	<b>Dietary composition during summer (June, July, August).</b>
<b>Fall</b>	<b>Dietary composition during fall (September, October, November).</b>
<b>Winter</b>	<b>Dietary composition during winter (December, January, February).</b>
<b>Location (subspecies)/ Habitat (measure)</b>	<b>State(s) or Canadian province(s) in which study was conducted (subspecies studied, if reported). Type of habitat associated with the reported values (measure used to quantify dietary composition).</b>
<b>Reference</b>	<b>Reference for study.</b>
<b>Note No.</b>	<b>Footnote number.</b>

Dietary composition can be expressed in many ways. In the Appendix, we have presented all measures of dietary composition encountered in the literature review. In the species profiles in Chapter 2, we have emphasized dietary composition measured as the percentage of the total food intake of each food type on a wet-weight basis. These data

are usually determined by analysis of stomach or other digestive tract contents. For entries based on these measures, the total of the values listed under each seasonal column should approximate 100 percent. As Chapter 4 indicates, it is relatively simple to estimate contaminant intakes when dietary composition is measured on a wet-weight basis. Dietary composition may also be measured on a dry-weight basis; information on the relative water content of the different dietary items provided in Chapter 4 can be used to convert dry-weight composition to wet-weight composition if needed. Dietary composition is often reported as frequency of occurrence in digestive tract contents, scats, or regurgitated pellets. For these measures, the total of the values in the seasonal columns can exceed 100 (e.g., fish occurred in 90 percent of scats, amphibia in 75 percent of scats, and molluscs in 15 percent of scats). We do not provide guidance on how to estimate contaminant intakes based on these measures; however, studies using these measures can indicate seasonal and geographic differences in diet.

### 1.5.3. Population Dynamics

Distribution and mortality parameters can be defined similarly for birds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians (Section 1.5.3.1). Reproductive parameters, however, differ among these groups (Sections 1.5.3.2 through 1.5.3.5). The column headers for population dynamics are described in Table 1-8.

#### 1.5.3.1. All Animals

Home range size (ha)/ Territory size (ha)/ Foraging radius (m)	Area usually listed in hectares, radius in kilometers. The home range for species such as mink or kingfishers, which spend most of their time along shoreline areas, is sometimes described as kilometers of shoreline. For some species with extremely small breeding territories, we used m <sup>2</sup> instead of hectares. For colonially nesting birds, foraging radii are listed in kilometers. For frogs, we found information only on male breeding territory size, which does not include the foraging range of either sex.
Population density (N/ha)	Usually listed as number (N) of individuals per hectare, although numbers of breeding pairs or nests per hectare are used for some species.

**Table 1-8. Column Headers for Tables of Factors for Population Dynamics**

<b>Age/Sex/ Cond./Seas.</b>	Age (e.g., A for adult, J for juvenile) Sex (e.g., M for male, F for female) Condition (e.g., I for incubating, NB for nonbreeding) Season (e.g., SP for spring, SU for summer).  [Note: Only information needed to correctly interpret the value is included.]
<b>Mean</b>	Mean value for population sampled $\pm$ standard deviation (SD), if reported. If SD is not reported, mean value for population sampled $\pm$ standard error (SE) of the mean, if reported. For some studies, a range of typical values may be presented instead of a mean.
<b>Range</b>	Range of values reported for the population sampled.
<b>Location (subspecies)/ Habitat</b>	State(s) or province(s) in which the study was conducted (subspecies studied, if reported). Type of habitat associated with the reported values.
<b>Reference</b>	Reference for study.
<b>Note No.</b>	Footnote number.

**Age at sexual maturity**      Age at which first successful reproduction occurs. In many long-lived species, only a portion of the population breeds at this age.

**Annual mortality rates**      Usually listed as percent per year. Can vary with age and sex of the animal.

**Longevity**      Mean longevity of adult members of the population (does not include juvenile mortality). When available, an estimate of maximum longevity is also provided (usually from studies of captive individuals).

**1.5.3.2. Birds**

**Clutch size**      Number of eggs laid per active nest (usually the number laid per female, but in some species, more than one female may lay in a single nest).

<b>Clutches per year</b>	<b>Number of successful clutches laid per year. Additional clutches may be laid if a clutch is lost early in incubation.</b>
<b>Days incubation</b>	<b>Measured from day incubation starts (often after laying of last egg) to hatching.</b>
<b>Age at fledging</b>	<b>Age at which young can maintain sustained flight. Parents usually continue to feed or to accompany young for some time after fledging.</b>
<b>Number fledged per active nest</b>	<b>Number fledged for each nest for which incubation was initiated.</b>
<b>Percent nests successful</b>	<b>Percent of active nests hatching eggs.</b>
<b>Number fledged per successful nest</b>	<b>Number fledged for each nest for which at least one young hatched.</b>

#### ***1.5.3.3. Mammals***

<b>Litter size</b>	<b>Based on embryo counts whenever possible. Use of placental scars can result in overestimation of litter size and counts of live pups in dens can result in underestimation of litter size.</b>
<b>Litters per year</b>	<b>Number of litters born each year.</b>
<b>Days gestation</b>	<b>Days of active gestation. For species with delayed implantation, this period can be substantially shorter than the period from mating to birth.</b>
<b>Pup growth rate</b>	<b>Usually reported as grams per day during a specified age interval. May be reported instead as a series of weights for pups of specified ages.</b>
<b>Age at weaning</b>	<b>Age when the pups begin to leave the nest or den to actively feed for most of their food.</b>

#### ***1.5.3.4. Reptiles and Amphibians***

<b>Clutch or litter size</b>	<b>Number of eggs laid per female for egg-laying species; number of live offspring born for species bearing live young (e.g., water snake). Reported by age and size of the female when appropriate.</b>
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<b>Clutches or litters per year</b>	<b>Number of clutches or litters produced each year. Not limited to successful clutches because there is no parental care in most temperate species.</b>
<b>Days incubation</b>	<b>Measured from laying of last egg to hatching. The duration of incubation depends on the temperature of the substrate into which eggs are laid.</b>
<b>Juvenile growth rate</b>	<b>Usually reported as grams per day during a specified age (or size) interval. May be reported instead as a series of weights for juveniles of specified sizes if those are the only data available.</b>
<b>Length at sexual maturity</b>	<b>Length at which the first successful reproduction usually occurs (see above). More commonly reported than weight or age at sexual maturity.</b>

#### **1.5.4. Seasonal Activities**

The meaning of most of the factors included under seasonal activities are self-evident. Those requiring additional explanation are described in Sections 1.5.4.1 through 1.5.4.3. The column headers for this section of the table are shown in Table 1-9.

**Table 1-9. Column Headers for Tables on Seasonal Activities**

<b>Begin</b>	<b>Month that the activity usually begins.</b>
<b>Peak</b>	<b>Month(s) that the activity peaks (most of the population is involved).</b>
<b>End</b>	<b>Month that the activity usually ends.</b>
<b>Location (subspecies)</b>	<b>State(s) or province(s) in which the study was conducted (subspecies studied, if reported).</b>
<b>Reference</b>	<b>Reference for study.</b>
<b>Note No.</b>	<b>Footnote number.</b>

#### **1.5.4.1. Birds**

**Mating/laying**                      These two factors are combined because birds lay eggs within a day or two of mating (they begin mating a day or two prior to laying the first egg).

#### **1.5.4.2. Mammals**

**Mating**                                Although for most mammals the mating season corresponds to conception and is followed immediately by gestation, some species exhibit delayed implantation.

**Parturition**                        Birth of the pups (also known as whelping for canids).

#### **1.5.4.3. Reptiles and Amphibians**

**Mating**                                Because fertilization is external for many amphibians (i.e., most toads and frogs and some salamanders), mating occurs at the same time as egg-laying for these species. For reptiles, fertilization is internal, and for some species, sperm may be stored for months or years following mating.

**Nesting**                              Because many female reptiles can store sperm, nesting (i.e., egg-laying) often occurs weeks or months after mating.

### **1.5.5. Abbreviations Used in Tables**

#### **Age (life stage)**

- A**     adult (for all groups)
- B**     both adults and juveniles/yearlings (for all groups)
- C**     chick (for birds)
- E**     eft (for newts)
- F**     fledgling (for birds)
- H**     hatchling (for birds, reptiles, and amphibians)
- J**     juvenile (for all groups)
- N**     nestling (for birds)
- or
- neonate (for mammals, water snakes)
- P**     pup (for mammals)
- T**     tadpole (for frogs)
- Y**     yearling (for all groups)



## Sex

B	both sexes
F	female
M	male

## Units

### time:

d	day
wk	week
yr	year

### energy:

cal	calorie
kcal	kilocalorie

### mass:

g	gram
kg	kilogram

### area:

ha	hectare
m <sup>2</sup>	square meter

### length:

mm	millimeter
cm	centimeter
m	meter
km	kilometer

### volume:

ml	milliliter
l	liter

### temperature:

°C	degrees Centigrade
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## Other

NS	not stated
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## 1.6. LITERATURE SEARCH STRATEGY

The profiles in this Handbook are intended to provide a readily available compendium of representative data for each selected species to assist in conducting screening-level exposure assessments. They are not intended to provide complete reviews of all available published and unpublished information or indepth biological summaries. Moreover, the Handbook is not intended to replace field guides or natural history or animal physiology texts. We have attempted to balance generalities, accuracy, and coverage of each species relative to the available literature to meet our stated purposes. We describe the process by which we identified literature for the Handbook below.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Office of Information Transfer conducted the primary literature search for species-specific information using their Wildlife Review/Fisheries Review database. The database is compiled by USFWS personnel from a review of over 1,130 publication sources (largely journals, but also USFWS publications) from the United States and other countries, most dating back to 1971. The search was conducted in May 1990 using common and scientific species names, but no further restrictions on search terms were applied. All titles identified for each species were reviewed to determine potential utility for the Handbook, and promising references were reviewed in full. Recent review articles, handbooks, and natural history texts were used to identify other relevant literature and literature from before 1971. Commercial databases were not searched initially. Following peer review of the Handbook in 1991 and 1992, all references submitted or identified by peer reviewers were evaluated, and additional relevant citations were obtained for review. Limited (1970 forward) literature searches for some species were conducted using commercial databases in 1992.

For information concerning physiology, allometric equations, energetics, and other general topics, literature was identified on the basis of recent review articles or books in the field suggested by experts in the field and by peer reviewers.

Because of resource limitations, we have included some values from secondary citations. In these cases, our intent was to carefully record the original source and to clearly indicate from which secondary source it was obtained. Users are encouraged to obtain the primary sources to verify these values.

We used certain field guides consistently throughout each taxonomic category to provide greater comparability of general species characteristics. The use of a specific field guide does not constitute endorsement.

Because our literature search strategy may not have included all journals of interest and did not consistently cover other sources of information (e.g., books, theses, dissertations, state wildlife reports, conference proceedings), we would appreciate any assistance that users might provide in identifying additional sources of information that

would help to fill data gaps or to improve the information in the Handbook. In particular, Ph.D. dissertations and master's theses often contain relevant but unpublished information.

## **1.7. REFERENCES**

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