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These are the column descriptors for the supporting data for Peterson et al. 2018 “Foraging and fasting can influence contaminant concentrations in animals: an example with mercury contamination in a free-ranging marine mammal” published in Proceedings of the Royal Society B.

Elephant\_seal\_ID: The identifier for each individual seal based on one of the flipper tags on each individual.

Sex: The sex of the sampled individual.

ProcedureDate: The date the animal was sampled while on land.

ForagingBloodPairedSubset: Whether the blood sample was used in the cross-foraging analyses (all samples used in cross-foraging or cross-fasting analyses were paired pre- and post-foraging or early- and late-fasting).

ForagingHairPairedSubset: Whether the hair sample was used in the cross-foraging analyses (all samples used in cross-foraging or cross-fasting analyses were paired pre- and post-foraging or early- and late-fasting).

ForagingMusclePairedSubset: Whether the muscle sample was used in the cross-foraging analyses (all samples used in cross-foraging or cross-fasting analyses were paired pre- and post-foraging or early- and late-fasting).

FastingBloodPairedSubset: Whether the blood sample was used in the cross-fasting analyses (all samples used in cross-foraging or cross-fasting analyses were paired pre- and post-foraging or early- and late-fasting).

FastingHairPairedSubset: Whether the hair sample was used in the cross-fasting analyses (all samples used in cross-foraging or cross-fasting analyses were paired pre- and post-foraging or early- and late-fasting).

FastingMusclePairedSubset: Whether the muscle sample was used in the cross-fasting analyses (all samples used in cross-foraging or cross-fasting analyses were paired pre- and post-foraging or early- and late-fasting).

Foraging trip: If a sample was used in the cross-foraging analyses, this column indicates the foraging trip to which the sample was associated (Post-breeding foraging trip vs. Post-moulting foraging trip).

TimePeriod\_Cross\_Foraging\_Analysis: If a sample was used in the cross-foraging analyses, this column indicates the time period (Pre-foraging vs. Post-foraging) to which the sample was associated.

Fasting period: If a sample was used in the cross-fasting analyses, this column indicates the fasting period to which the sample was associated (Breeding vs. Moulting).

TimePeriod\_Cross\_Foraging\_Analysis: If a sample was used in the cross-foraging analyses, this column indicates the time period to which the sample was associated (Early fasting vs. Late fasting).

Mass\_Procedure\_kg: The mass of the seal (kg) when the sample was collected.

Standard\_Length\_cm: The standard length of the seal (cm) when the sample was collected.

Blood\_THg\_ppm\_ww: The blood total mercury (THg) concentration in μg/g wet weight (ww).

Muscle\_THg\_ppm\_dw: The muscle total mercury (THg) concentration in μg/g dry weight (dw).

Hair\_THg\_ppm\_dw: The hair total mercury (THg) concentration in μg/g dry weight (dw).