ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are many people who have made important contributions to my research and completion of the thesis. At the onset, I am indebted to my guide Dr. Prasanta Kumar Saikia, Associate Professor, Animal Ecology and Wildlife Biology, Department of Zoology, Gauhati University, for his constant guidance and providing all facilities needed for this work.

My sincere thanks go to the Head, Prof. K. Dutta, Department of Zoology, for providing the laboratory and other facility necessary for the work. I also extend my heartiest thanks to Prof. J. Kalita, Prof. A. Dutta, Prof. D.K. Sharma, Prof. M.M. Goswami, Prof. U.C. Goswami, Prof. R.K. Bhola and Prof. J.C. Kalita for their valuable suggestions and advices throughout the course of my study. I am also very grateful to Prof. P.C. Bhattacharjee (Retd.) and Prof. A. Borkotoki (Retd.) for their valuable suggestions.

I would also like to extend my deep sense of gratitude to Mr. Jayanta Sarmah for his constant support and help in the departmental library throughout my research work. I would also like to thank all the office staff, Department of Zoology, Gauhati University, for their support.

This research would not have been possible without financial support. I was a grateful recipient of an University Grants Commissions merit scholarship RFSMS (Research Fellowship in Science for Meritorious Students) and particularly I am thankful to the Department of Zoology, Gauhati University for selecting me as a RFSMS fellow.
Credits:

Photographs-

Rajeev Basumatary- Plate-3.3: F, Plate-3.7: M and Plate-3.8: O

Nayanjyoti Barman Plate-3.7: N and Plate-3.15: A (inset)