Pursuing a Ph.D. project is a both painful and enjoyable experience. It’s just like climbing a high peak, step by step, accompanied with encouragement and trust with so many people’s kind help. It is to these individuals that my heartfelt gratitude and thanks go out to, for without their help, this doctoral thesis would have been undefined.

It is difficult to overstate my gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Jogen Chandra Kalita for all the hope he has put on me, before I thought I could do any research at all! I am happy to acknowledge my debt to him, for giving me the confidence to explore my research interests, and the guidance to avoid getting lost in my exploration. Throughout my thesis-writing period, he has provided encouragement, sound advice, and lots of good ideas. His enthusiasm, his inspiration, his great efforts to explain things clearly, his feedback in the final stages of my research was invaluable.

My sincere gratitude goes to Prof R. K. Bhola, Head, Department of Zoology, Gauhati University for providing me with all the necessary facilities and provisions required for conducting my research work.

I would also like to extend my thanks to all the teachers of the Department of Zoology, Gauhati University. I am indebted to Dr. Sudip Dey (NEHU) and Prof K. G. Bhattacharya (Department of Chemistry, Gauhati University) for their immense help during my study.

My heartfelt thanks go to my best friend Dr. Mehnaz Mazumdar for her unconditional support whenever I needed it. Her selfless perseverance and attention to my work consistently found pearls among my heaps of data. I am intellectually indebted to her ideas and our conversations. I express my whole hearted thanks to my dear friends Ms Naorem Linthoi, Dr. Afifa Kausar and Ms Tamanna Zamal for always being there and making this journey worthwhile.

Individual thanks go out to my colleagues Dr. Ansarul Haque and Dr. Bedabati Dasgupta for giving me memorable laboratory days! Special mentions and thanks are due to all my lab mates of Physiology and Biochemistry Laboratory. I would also like to
acknowledge my appreciation to all the non teaching staff of Department of Zoology, Gauhati University.

Most importantly, my warmest gratitude go to my parents Prof. Samarendra Nath Roy and Smt. Chabi Roy who through my childhood and study career have always encouraged me to follow my heart and inquisitive mind. They form the backbone and origin of my happiness. Their love and support without any complaint or regret has enabled me to complete this Ph.D. project. I owe my every achievement to both of them. I am also thankful to my younger brother, Sankhadeep, whose constant enquiries, encouragement and concerns in my research work always propelled me to achieve more.

I gratefully acknowledge the financial assistance provided by University Grants Commission (UGC), New Delhi through the RFSMS (Research Fellowships in Science for Meritorious Students) Fellowship.

Lastly, but never the least, I thank God, without whose grace and kindness, this odyssey would have been practically inconceivable.