Acknowledgements

I express my sincere gratitude and thanks to my supervisor, Dr. Raza Rafiqul Hoque and co-supervisor, Dr. Sanjeeva Nayaka who gave me an opportunity to work under them. They have been very patient, encouraging and extended their indispensable help and insight throughout my thesis and motivated me with their immense knowledge during the research and while writing this thesis. Without their guidance, this thesis would have been incomplete. Besides these I would also like to thank the families of both my guide for being so honest, loving, caring and giving a homely environment during my stay away from home.

I sincerely appreciate Prof. Mihir Kanti Chaudhury, Vice Chancellor, Tezpur University for providing laboratory facilities, financial assistance in the initial stage, sound environment, and other equipment facilities related to my work. I am also grateful to the University Grants Commission (UGC) for financial aid in the form of Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship (RGNF) (Sanction No. F. 14-749(ST)/2009(SA-III) dated. 08/12/2010) and Ministry of Earth Science (MoES), Govt. of India for the project entitled ‘Physiochemical characterization of aerosol and source apportionment in mid Brahmaputra plain in Assam: A modeling approach,’ without which I would not have been able to continue my research.

My heartfelt thanks goes to Director of National Botanical Research Institute, Lucknow and especially to Dr. D.K. Upreti for giving me permission to visit the Institute from time to time and make good use of the Lichenology laboratory without any hesitation. Besides these, I thank Dr. D.K. Upreti for providing necessary accommodations and making my stay at ease during the visit and also extending all kinds of help from identification to valuable suggestions and access to literatures.

I extend my gratefulness to my Doctoral committee members, Prof. K.K. Baruah, Prof. K.P. Sharma, Dr. A.K. Das and Dr. P. Deb for their valuable suggestions and guidance. I am also thankful to Dr. Kh. A. Devi, Dr. N. Gogoi, Dr. M. Kumar, Dr. S.S. Bhattacharya, Ms. Sumi Handique, Dr. A. Prakash and Dr. S. Mitra for their constant support and help.

I am thankful to Dr. Gaurav Mishra, Dr. Pulak Das, Dr. Rajesh Bajpai and Dr. Vertika Shukla for their suggestions and help in the form of literatures. I also thank Dr. Santosh Joshi and Dr. Urvashi Dubey, Komal Ingle, Roshni Khare and Sucheta Asthana for helping me out in identifying some of my lichens. I also thank all the members of National Botanical Research
Institute, who have extended their support in one way or the other and made me feel comfortable during my stay in the institute.

I am blessed to have my fellow lab-mates, Pratibha Deka, Pranamika Bhuyan, Karishma Husssain, Nivedita Barman, Sahjahan Ali and Warisha Rehman. In the past years I have a wonderful experience working with them. They have always been by my side, ever willing to help, encouraging and supporting me in any conditions or situations. Besides them, I would also like to thank Natasha Hazarika, Dharitri Gogoi, Sanghita Saikia and Darshana Borah for their needful help during the period.

I take the opportunity to thank all my friends in the other labs \textit{viz.} Gitamani Dutta, Leena Borah, Anushree Baruah, Moumita Sarkar, Mrigakh Borah, Parijat Saikia, Jintu Sharma, Dr. Pratibha Sharma, Nabajit Hazarika, Nilotpal Deka and the entire family of my department for extending their love and support.

Sincere thanks goes to authorities of Citralekha Udyan, Mission Hospital, Namari National Park, Tezpur University, Gauhati University, Emmanuel Mosahary (MLA), Mirzanur Rahman, Rihon Daimari (MLA), Rushila Brahma, Sanghita Dutta and their family and the local people of Sonitpur district, for extending their co-operation during the course of my field work.

I also thank Jiten Nath and Paramjyoti Borah and my husband, Kadesh Dwimu Mosahary who had been with me and helped me in the field while collecting my samples.

I offer my thanks to Rajesh Kumar Sah for taking pain in preparing my maps and Jayanta Borah and Ratan Baruah for analyzing my samples.

Last but not the least, I would like to thank my husband who constantly provided me moral support and gave me ideas in working out my plans. More especially I thank Anantashia Barla and my sister-in law, Jimmy Lahari, who has been of great help with my household works and who took good care of my son during the period. I also extend my appreciation to all my family members for their support, understanding and encouragement throughout.

For those whom I might have failed to mention, I sincerely apologize and extend my thankfulness to you all from the core of my heart.

Sincerely

Rebecca Daimari