ACKNOWLEDGMENT

First and Foremost, I would like to thank **God** for giving me strength and ability to accomplish this work. I also thank God for blessing me with parents who always stood with me in favourable and unfavourable conditions of my life. My **father**, whose words of encouragement and appreciation has always given me strength to perform my work to the best and my **mother** for always being there with her soft words of comfort, which has given me the strength to pass through the most difficult moments smoothly.

I deem a great pleasure to thank my Guiding teacher Dr. G. S. Padate, Reader, Department of Zoology, The M. S. University of Baroda, for her invaluable guidance, constructive criticism, encouragement and support throughout the study period. I also thank her for introducing me to the coulourful world of birds. She was always there to lend her helping hand and experienced vision to solve the difficulties.

I thank Head Department of Zoology, for providing me with the laboratory facilities. I also thank the authorities of Maharaja Sayajirao University for sanctioning the University Scholarship which supported me while carrying out initial work of this study. I thank Prof. A. V. Ramachandran and all the teachers and the non teaching staff for their valuable support.

I take an opportunity to thank **Dr. Maina Padhye** for critically going through the drafts of thesis and giving imperative suggestions in making this work to its best. I also thank **Dr. M. V. Asnani** for going through the thesis and her valuable suggestions. I am

thankful to **Dr. B. M. Parasharya** and **Dr. Nishit Dharaiya** for providing me the Literature and also giving me valuable advises. I also thank **Dr. Arpita, Dr. Sapna** and **Dr. Bhavna** for their words of encouragement.

I am thankful to my sister Dr. Manisha shah and my co-brother Dr. Vrajesh Shah for always being there for the moral support and helpful advices. I also thank my sister Mrs. Manjusha Pikle and my co-brother Mr. Suhas Pikle who have always encouraged me in pursuing this study.

Friends, the angles in disguise are always there willing to help us through any difficulty. Just saying thank you to Jagruti Rathod 'my friend' would not be enough. Here I take an opportunity to thank her for everything and for being there to encourage me. She has always lent her ear to my problems and also supported me with her encouraging words to fight with any kind of situation. I also thank Niraj Joshi and Sudip Banerjee for the help that they have provided and the joyous moments during this work; making these years the most memorable time of my life. I acknowledge Nirjara for her meticulous help in the proof reading of this thesis. I am thankful to Dr. Shiva, Yashkamal and Dr. Raktim for words of advices. I also want to thank Reena, Priyanka, Pratyush, Gauri, Ansar, Pranav, Prem, Darshee and Kiran. I thank all M.Sc. students for the light cheering moments at the Department.

I thank Shri Hasmukh Shah, Chairman Gujarat Ecology Society for allowing me to continue my studies. I also thank Professor K. K. Ghosh, Director (SAT) GES for his cooperation during the writing phase of this thesis. I will fail to my duties if I do not

thank my colleagues at Gujarat Ecology Society. I thank **Dr. Jayendra**, **Dr. Deepa** and **Dr. Vinoth** for the helpful advices and Mr. Narayan Jadeja for his cooperation during the final phases of this work.

I thank **Dishant**, Janki and Mannan for their helping hands during thesis writing. I am grateful to Kartik. Upadhyay and Manoj Thakkar for providing excellent photographs of Birds of Wadhwana.

Finally I also thank all those who have accompanied me during the field visits to the study areas and standing by me in all the difficulties faced during these visits.

SONAL L. DESHKAR