

P R O L O G U E

All efforts have been made to minimize repetitions in this thesis. Wherever repetitions have occurred in the text, they have been unavoidable, in order to maintain both continuity of all the chapters in the thesis as well as the strength of each chapter. And I, Patrick I. Ndukuba, the candidate for the degree of doctor of philosophy in Zoology, am solely responsible for any errors of omission or commission in this thesis, and I apologize to all who may come across such errors while reading the thesis.