

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Several people and organisations have contributed to the successful conclusion of the present studies.

The work was funded by the Wildlife Circle, Department of Environment and Forests, Government of West Bengal from June 1994-August 1996 and March - June 1997. From September 1996 to the completion of the thesis Peter Scott Trust- WPA-SARO provided me the funds. The Postgraduate Department of Zoology Darjeeling Government College implemented the research project and allowed me to use their library and laboratory facilities. WPA-South Asia Regional office at the WWF-India Secretariat provided all technical help and guidance in the field and allowed me to use their facilities during the thesis write up. WPA- International provided me funds to attend the WPA International Symposium at Malaysia in 1997. Centre of Wildlife and Ornithology, Aligarh Muslim University provided their Library, laboratory and computer facilities during my long stay there. Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun provided me their library facility for collection of literature. The Zoological Survey of India identified all insect and other soil microarthropods that I collected during the study. The Chief Wildlife Warden Government of West Bengal granted me permission to work in the Singhalila National Park

I thank Mr. Manoj Nandi, I.F.S., for initiating this kind of a project in Singhalila National Park. Mr. S.S. Rasaily I.F.S. encouraged my interest in wildlife and nature and it was his encouragement, which saw me taking up this work. Mr. A. Raha I.F.S. Conservator of Forests, Mr. Ravikant Sinha, I.F.S, Mr. N. Singhal, I.F.S., Mr. L.G. Lepcha I.F.S. and Mr. P.R. Pradhan W.B.F.S. all contributed in either to get the project started or to run it smoothly till the end. Mr. J.N. Roy provided his government quarters to be used as a field station and

was of immense help in everything. Mr. Bhuwan Giri B.O. was like my local guardian and provided transport, accommodation and co-operation. It was he who took me all around the National Park and got me acquainted with all the Forest Department staff. Mr. Pravin Katwal the former B.O. of Singhalila Range helped me to familiarise myself with the study area by providing useful information and suggestions. Mr. B. Lepcha B.O. Singhalila Range provided all help and logistics whenever I was working in the Sandakphu area.

No words would be sufficient to thank the people of Singhalila for the support and help they provided especially when a town-bred girl went to live in their midst. To mention the name of every one of them would not be possible and though all are gratefully acknowledged I mention here the names of a few main people only. Forest Department staff Phinzo, Deshkumar, Nim Tshering, Sangay, Pemba, Tilbahadur, Amu and Mani were always with me in the field and went out of their way to get my work done. My neighbours in Gairibans especially the family of Nim Tshering and Paras Tamng were very caring and catered to all my needs, making life so easy in the field. I am grateful to all the caretakers of the Tourist Department and PWD huts- Paras, Mingma, Omay, Shakti, Rinzie, Jaya, Ramprasad, Lhakpa, Passang and Tshering for providing accommodation whenever I landed at their doorsteps even in peak tourist seasons. I appreciate the warm hospitality offered by the family of Mr. Milan Pradhan whenever I was working in the Rimbick area of the National Park.

I am grateful to the Principal Darjeeling Government College, Head and all teaching staff of the Department of Zoology, Darjeeling Government College for allowing me to use the facilities and the Librarians and laboratory assistants for all help and co-operation received. Prof. B.Dasgupta the Principal Investigator of the project provided me his eminent guidance and helped me select my topic of research. I thank Mr. M. Choudhury and Mr. D.Sengupta the Co-investigators of the project for their interest in my work and for help in

smooth implementation of the project. At North Bengal University I am grateful to the Head of the Department of Zoology and Prof. Asim Chakraborty for all help and support.

My thanks to Dr. Rahmani the present Director of the BNHS for allowing me to do my work at the Centre of Wildlife and Ornithology during his tenure as the Chairman there. I am also grateful to all the faculty members of the Department who accepted me as one of their own researchers. The help and assistance of the non-teaching staff in the department is also gratefully acknowledged. I especially thank Dr. Jamal A. Khan for arranging accommodation and helping me to settle down at Aligarh and for all academic contribution he made to the study through suggestions and discussions. I am grateful to Dr. Salim Javed for all the help he provided during data entry, made his literature collection available and for listening ever so patiently to all my queries about data entry, analysis and writing. I thank Dr. Satish Sharma for all fruitful discussions, suggestions, literature and various kinds of favours done during my stay in Aligarh. I thank Mrs. Nasrine the Librarian for going out of her way to help me in getting whatever I asked and allowing me to search through her meticulously arranged almirahs. At the Centre I got many friends and colleagues who contributed in their own ways to my work and made my days in Aligarh pleasant - Tahmina, Ayesha, Orus, Shah, Farah, Sangeeta, Zafar, Sajiv, Mahesh, Hillol, Huma, Shahid, Junaid, Khursheed. They have all taught me, commented, suggested and have gone out of their way to help in various other things and their help and friendship are appreciated. Rashid Raza came to my field when I was new to Wildlife Science and provided suggestions on the fieldwork methods. Dhananjay Katju also came to the field and provided useful suggestions ~~papers~~ and important papers. Both of them are acknowledged for their contribution.

I am grateful to my co-guide Dr. Rahul Kaul for all the help and guidance in the field, data analyses and for going through the drafts of each chapter a number of times for correction, comments and suggestions. I am especially thankful to him for arranging for funds to support me during my thesis writing and for allowing me to use the facilities of his office to do the write up. I am thankful to Mr. Pawan Atwal the office assistant for all his help and assistance at the Office. At WWF-I I am grateful to Sonali and Modit for helping me to get maps and other pictures scanned for the thesis. In Delhi it was a home away from home because of the hospitality provided by my relatives, I'm especially grateful to uncle, aunty and their daughters Swarna, Sneha and Shalini.

I gratefully acknowledge Dr.G.K. Saha my guide for all field and technical guidance. He has been most supportive and has taken personal interest and care in all aspects of the work. My research assistant Mr. Rajen Sherpa was indispensable in the field. His hard work and personal interest made routine field work enjoyable and timely. People who volunteered to help me in the field especially during the call count season are gratefully acknowledged- Sanjay, Karma, Lalit, Deepen, Bharat, and Tenzing. I appreciate the help of Ramana Nanda who during his month long stay in Singhalila in 1995 provided much needed assistance in the field.

I am grateful to my friend and colleague Ms. Sunita Pradhan for all help and support throughout the research period and the wonderful understanding we have shared all these years. I am thankful to Mr. and Mrs R.B. Pradhan for their encouragement and support. All my family members have been a source of support and encouragement and I am grateful to all of them. I am especially grateful to my parents for being ever so supportive and appreciating what I was doing. I dedicate this thesis to them as a token of my gratitude for all that they have done for me.

