I have written two theses in the past, and the acknowledgment section is always the one that makes me reflect the most. The completion of a PhD is not result of the effort started four years ago, but it is the result of a process that began many years ago. It might have started when my mother taught me how to read. To her, my deepest gratitude for her love and support. My brother has not only been a friend but also a peer who I have shared a lot with. My brother, by the way, increased his fitness enormously by producing twins, the notion of Antar and Luciano being around is such a blessing. I want to thank Lize for being with me in the last stretch of my PhD and being part in this new stage of our lives in Aberdeen.

I thank Rampal for giving me the opportunity to be part of his lab. I have learnt a lot from him, both as a scientist and as a person. He certainly is a good mentor who invests time and effort in his students. Formal meetings and brief chats with him are always insightful, his teachings go beyond explanations and short lectures: he sets a great example. Many PhD students live in constant fear or dislike with their supervisors, I am glad it was not my case. Quite the opposite.

I thank professors Bokma, Rabosky and Wit for accepting the invitation to be part of my assessment committee, I appreciate the time and effort to look into my thesis.

I am grateful to Alex Pigot that was a source of encouragement, a great person to discuss ideas and learn stuff from. He spent a great deal of time with me working on Chapter 1, at the end, the outcome is worthy.

The interaction with Martine Maan has been very nice, smooth and productive. I like seeing how Martine gives biological sense to what we found by modelling. I am glad we got to work together in Chapter 3.

I thank Hanno for translating my R code into cpp which dramatically increased the speed of the computation and allowed us to do a more thorough exploration of our model’s behaviour.

In our attempt at a journal club, I had the chance to interact closely with Elodie, later, we worked nicely on Chapter 3. Thijs has been a great collaborator, delivering everything fast and neat.

I spent quite some hours with Paul doing secsse stuff, it was always productive and fun. We also got to talk about birding and latinamerican lifestyle. The same with Kasper, another poor soul infected with the birding virus.

Without all the work done by Ingeborg, Corine and Joke many things would be upside down or just would not work. I can only be grateful to them because their hard work and kindness.

I started my PhD almost at the same time than Richel, Kasper, Giovanni, Pancho, Liang and Karen. This batch of old PhD students (we all are around the same age, except
Karen) made my stay in Groningen better by sharing time at the office and in non-academic activities. At some point, a second batch of PhD joined the group: Pedro, Raph, Shu, Josh, Theo, all very young. I am glad I had the chance to spend time together and collaborate in research projects. I am grateful to Hylke as he translated the summary of this thesis into Dutch. They are all not only talented colleagues but also friends. Also de post docs, Joss and Cyrus, nice people to have around. Listening to Cyrus’s anecdotes might make your mind blow.

I have shared many things with Beau, our activities have ranged from geocaching to visiting (unexpectedly) the emergency room. I am sure we will get to do many more things. I thank good friends for being there: Andreas, Rianne, Dani Pocetta, Jon, Henk, Klaas, Claas.

I thank the friendship of the Mexican component of my life in Groningen some of them are in the business of science other are not: Larisa, Danae, Alberto, Emiliano, Fernando, Moni, Bati, Cacho, Pablo, Celia, Hilde, Eduardo, Yao, Claudia, Pamela, Ileana and his kids, Vania, Adrian, Nuria and El Camacho. And of course the Mexican component that stays in Mexico: Rafa Rueda, Memo, Sara, Leohawk, Almaguer, Iris, Sergio Aguilar, Carlos Barradas, Irving Rojas and el Rica.

My PhD was sponsored by a Mexican grant from Conacyt and SEP, without that support, I could never have come to Groningen. For my application to this grant, professors Jorge Schondube, Katy Renton and Rafael Villegas provided valuable aid. Also, I have had fruitful scientific collaborations with them. I thank Dani Tovilla, Rafael Bribiesca, Andrea Malpica, Sarita Covarrubias, Romeo Saldaña, Hector Arita, Eduardo Ruiz-Sanchez who are my collaborators in Mexico too, we have kept on working on ideas. I hope we can continue like this this. I thank Fabricio Villalobos and Susana Magallon for discussing ideas with me and giving me the opportunity of sharing part of my work with a broader audience.

Recently, professor Justin Travis in the University of Aberdeen has given me the opportunity to work with him, I really appreciate that he waited for me to finish my PhD to join the team. I am looking forward to working together on the Wallacea project, I think there is a great potential in there. I thank professors Lesley Lancaster, Greta Bocedi and Cécile Gubry-Rangin for seconding Justin on his decision to choose me and being great colleagues.