ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I sincerely acknowledge the humble involvement of my supervisor, Dr. A.K. Gupta, Senior Lecturer, School of Life Sciences, Pt. Ravishankar Shukla University, Raipur, in each and every step of the present work. In fact, it was his constant inspiration, moral support and able guidance that enabled me to complete this work without any difficulty.

I express my deepest sense of gratitude towards Prof. S. M. Agarwal, Ex-Vice Chancellor, Pt. Ravishankar Shukla University, who very kindly spared several hours of his precious time in discussing problems, providing novel ideas and extending valuable advises during the course of this study. In fact, whenever I approached him with any kind of problem he was always there with an array of the best possible solutions and encouragement.

I take this opportunity to thank Prof. S.S. Ali, Chairman, School of Life Sciences, Pt. Ravishankar Shukla University, Raipur for kindly providing all research facilities. I also thank the other faculty members, Prof. M.L. Naik, Dr. S.K. Mishra, Dr. V. Rai, Dr. A.K. Pati, Dr(Mrs) Aditi Poddar, Dr. S.C. Naithani, Dr. G.B.K.S. Prasad, Dr(Miss) N. Gupta and Miss. V. Kapade for their encouragement and suggestions.

I feel very much indebted to my teacher, Prof. M. Ashfaque, HOD, Department of Zoology, Govt' Model College of Science, Raipur, for providing valuable guide-
lines, encouragement and due assistance in the form of library and other research facilities.

I am also grateful to Prof. B.K. Srivastava, Principal, Govt. College, Bhanupratappur, for his research promoting nature which provided me ample time for compiling and submitting this dissertation.

I am thankful to my senior colleagues, Dr. Jayant Biswas, Dr(Miss) Abha Dubey, Dr(Mrs) Shobha Gawari, Dr(Miss) Mamtata Goswami (RA, NBRI, Lucknow) and Dr(Mrs) Poonam Shashank, for their moral support. I also thank my classmate Miss. Sarita Jain, Research Scholar, Govt. Model College of Science, and other research scholars, Mr. Prasad Wadegaonkar, Mr. K.S. Chaitanya, Mr. Afque Quarasht, Mr. Ramesh Rahangdale, Mrs. P. Kotwaliwale, Mrs. Maya Shedpure, Mrs. Renu Maheshwari, Mrs. Seema Gupta, Mrs. Preeti Mishra, Miss. Shashi Gupta, Mrs. E. Madhu, Mrs. V. Elizabeth, Miss. Geeta Nair, Miss. Lata Lalwani, Miss. Santosh Agarwal, Miss. Arti Chandrawanshi, Miss. Sangeeta Sharma, Miss. Bunita Sharma and Miss. Vandana Sahani (Dept. of Statistics) for their unreserved help in various ways. I also thank all my research colleagues from other UTD's Pt. RSBU, Raipur, for their feeling concern and to the supporting staff of School of Life Sciences for cooperation.

Financial assistance from Madhya Pradesh Council of Science and Technology, Bhopal during this study is gratefully acknowledged.

(K.K. Harris)