Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I thank Providence for the manifold blessings I have received to pursue and realise this intellectual exercise.

In this nebulous world, the perennial reciprocal virtues of love and gratitude are of permanent value. For the loving kindness, genuine cooperation, gracious and ungrudging guidance lavished on me, I offer my great gratitude to my guide, Dr. E. John Jothi Prakash, Principal and Head of the Department of Botany, Tirunelveli Dakshina Mara Nadar Sangam College, T. Kallikulam, Tamil Nadu. Language is inadequate to voice my deep sense of reverence and gratitude for suggesting this precise research topic and for his meticulous care, sustained encouragement and incessant help all through the course of my study.

With great gratitude I would like to express my sincere and hearty thanks to my Co-guide Dr. Sam Manohar Das, Associate Professor in Zoology, Scott Christian College (Autonomous), for his careful and enduring guidance, corrections and apt suggestions and timely advice throughout the tenure of this research programme.

I am thankful to my Professor, Dr. S. Prasanna Kumar, Vice-Principal and HOD of Zoology, Scott Christian College (Autonomous) who made available his supports in a number of ways with a depth in knowledge.

I take this opportunity to thank Dr. S. Chellakumar Rose, Principal, Scott Christian College (Autonomous) for all the help extended to me with words of hope, encouragement and inspiration. I must thank Dr. E. James R. Daniel, former Principal, Scott Christian College (Autonomous) for enrolling me and encouraging me in the development of Research career.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to Dr. A. James William, President, AIFUCTO and Dr. Mrs. X. Rosary Mary, Director, Department of Youth Welfare, Manonmanium Sundaranar University for their very persistent encouragement throughout the tenure of this study.
I am thankful to the faculty members of the Zoology Department, Dr. S. Godwin Wesley, Dr. M. Kanagappan, Dr. Ramani Bai, Mr. Robin Perinba Smith, Dr. Stevens Jones, Dr. Selvaraj, Dr. P. Justin Kumar, Mr. C. Sundar Raj, Mr. Jeyasekhar, Mr. C. Albert, Dr. Shirley Daniel, Mrs. Leena, Dr. Grace Marin, for their co-operation during the course of this study.

I am also grateful to Dr. E. Mahiban Ross, Dr. M. Feroz Khan, Dr. Y. Lenin Raj, Dr. Shereeba, Dr. Reeba, Mr. Praveen Pole, Mr. Jeben, Mr. A.V. Aji Kumar, Mr. S. R. Sunith Shine, Mrs. Uma Rajeswari, Mrs. Jeya and Miss. Shenkani, Research colleagues in the Department of Zoology for their assistance during the course of study.

I am much indebted to my research colleagues, Mrs. Thilsath Fathima Quraiza, Miss. P. P. Vanathi Devi, Mrs. P. Tamil Muthu, Miss. Shirly Caroline, Miss. J. Nithya, Miss. S. Anitha, Mrs. Venci Candida and Miss. P. Nisha, Technical Assistant for the help rendered at every stage of my research activities.

I express my hearty thanks to Mrs. Medo Merina, Assistant Professor of Botany, N.M.C. College, Marthandam for her friendly help with valuable suggestions.

I am very grateful to Mr. J. Kiruba, District Malaria Officer, Nagercoil for providing valuable informations and clarifying doubts.

I am thankful to Mr. K.S. Lawrence, PC NET, Nagercoil for his painstaking efforts and the neat execution of the thesis in time.

Most importantly, I am enormously grateful to my loving mother, Mrs. Rubaney Vincent, my brothers, Mr. Moses M. Kumar, Mr. Stellin Joseph, Mr. V. Dinesh and Mr. Rajeswaran Strauss, my sister-in-law, Mrs. Aileen Strauss, my supportive nephews, R. Garry and R. Jeffrey, my mama, Mr. Raja Singh, my maami, Mrs. Shantha Singh, my cousin, S. Sishanth and Jeya mama for their unfailing encouragement in all my endeavors with their moral support and constant prayers.

ANITA YESHVADHA VINCENT