ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I express my deep sense of gratitude to my guide, Dr. P. K. K. Nair, for the encouragement, considerable freedom, constant inspiration and support he had provided during the pains taking investigations.

I would not have been in this field, if I were not a student of my teacher, Dr. C. Mohankumar, Head, Dept. of Botany, University College, Thiruvananthapuram. I express my sincere gratitude to him for the constant inspiration he provided with stimulating discussions and valuable suggestions.

I am indebted to Director of Collegiate Education for giving permission to pursue the research on a part time basis. I express my sincere gratitude to Prof. C. A. Narayana Panickar, Principal, Govt. Victoria College, Palakkad and Smt. K. Anandavally, Head, Dept. of Botany, Govt. Victoria College, Palakkad for giving me support for pursuing my research programme and complete my thesis.

I could not complete my thesis without the encouragement, moral support constant inspiration and companionship provided by Sri. Ravi Abraham, and I express my deep sense of gratitude for him.

Many people have generously given of their time and help in the process of the evolution and realization of this thesis. It would not have been possible to complete this work without the constant support provided by the forest officials of the Forest department, Govt. of Kerala, beekeepers and tribal community of the district. I express my sincere gratitude for them.

I am thankful for the pains taken by the staff, Digiprint, Palakkad, for the neat preparation of the manuscript and photoplates.

Last, but not the least, I am indebted to my family members for their moral support and encouragement.

(Maya C. Nair)