ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to place on record my deep sense of gratitude and indebtedness to Dr. Nelson P. Abraham M.Sc. PhD, Lecturer, Selection Grade, Department of Zoology, St. Thomas College, Kozhencherry for his inspiring guidance and supervision throughout the investigation and valuable help in the preparation of the thesis.

My sincere thanks are due to Management, Prof. K. George Abraham M.Sc. M. Phil. (Principal), Smt. Rossy Isaac Nallangara M.Sc. M. Phil. Head of the Department, St. Thomas College, Kozhencherry for the facilities provided in the Department to carry out the work successfully. I am also thankful to all the teaching and non teaching staff of this Department for their kind co-operation and help throughout the study.

I am thankful to Dr. Mathew Oommen, Reader, Department of Zoology, University of Kerala, Dr. Ramanujam, Sr. Scientist, Dr. Mathew Daniel Achan (Former Principal) and Smt. Leelamma Alex (Former Head of the Department) St. Thomas College, Kozhencherry for the inspiration given by them.

I would like to express my deep sense of gratitude to Dr. Santhosh, Department of Environmental Science, University of Kerala for his valuable help and I am also thankful to Dr. Gireesh, C.M.F.R.I, Dr. Kurian Mathew Abraham, Department of Zoology, Marthoma College, Prof. T. M. Jacob, Department of Statistics, Nirmala College and Sri. Anvar, Department of Zoology, University of Kerala, for the help rendered in the preparation of the thesis.

I am also thankful to the Devaswom Board Management and the Principal Dr. K Mohanan Pillai, D.B. Pampa College, Parumala for the permission granted to me for deputation to undergo the course. My sincere thanks are also due to U.G.C for awarding F.I.P fellowship.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. C. P. Nair, Smt. Maya Rani and Smt. Sini of C.E.P.C, Kollam for the Laboratory facilities and help provided and Unix.com, Kazhakkuttom for D.T.P services. I am also thankful to Smt. Vimala, Research scholar, St. Thomas College; Smt. Sheeja, Lecturer; Head of the Department of Zoology, teaching and non teaching staff, D.B. Pampa College for their encouragement.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the fishermen of Sasthamkotta especially Mr. Dennis and family for the help and co-operation for sample collection and netting.

I am thankful to my parents for their support and blessings.

Above all, I thank God almighty for his blessings.

S. GIRIJAKUMARI