ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is my pleasure to place on record my deep sense of gratitude to Dr: (Mrs) V.J. Kuttyamma, Reader Marine Biology, School of Marine Sciences for her deep interest and inspiring guidance throughout the course of the research work.

I have no words to express my sincere gratitude to Dr: A. Mohandas Reader, School of Environmental Studies, who wholeheartedly spent his precious time for valuable discussions, constant encouragement and constructive criticism during the various stages of my research career.

My sincere thanks are also due to Dr: N.R. Menon, Professor and Head of the Division of Marine Biology for the timely suggestions, encouragement and providing necessary laboratory facilities.

Acknowledgements are also due to Prof: G.S. Sharma, former Director of the School of Marine Sciences and Prof: Y.L. Dora, the present Director, for encouraging me throughout my research period.

I am indebted to Prof: R.C. Pillai, D.B. College, Sasthamcottah for the inspiration given to me to build up a research career.

The strenuous efforts of Dr: K. Mohan Kumar, Lecturer, School of Marine Sciences for his valuable advice and help in the statistical analysis of the data and preparation of the graphs is gratefully acknowledged.
My thanks are due to my friends K.S. Gopalakrishnan, K. Sasi-dharan, K.N. Prabhudeva, A.V. Sasikumar, Sheeba George, Maria George and others for their help given to me during my research period.

I am also grateful to Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, of the Department of Aquatic Biology, and Mr. C.G. Rajendran of the College of Fisheries for their constant encouragements.

I wish to thank Mrs. Lalitha, School of Marine Sciences for typing the manuscript and Mr. N.G. Mani of M/s. Coastal Impex for typing the fair copy of this thesis.

The co-operation given by the teaching and non-teaching staff of the Cochin University of Science and Technology is gratefully acknowledged.

The financial assistance received from the University by means of research fellowship is also acknowledged.

......