Mites associated with fruit trees, vegetables and ornamental plants play an important role in agriculture and horticulture because of their manifold importance either as pests or as useful biocontrolling agents.

In relation to West Bengal, where a sizeable portion of land is devoted to agriculture and horticulture, the mite pests pose a serious problem to the farmers. Though quite a good amount of information in this regard is available from West Bengal yet, nothing was done with special reference to mites infesting fruit trees, vegetables and ornamental plants and no consolidated work in this aspect is available either.

In order to fill up this gap, the present work was taken up to prepare a consolidated account involving taxonomy and bioecology. Since this work is the first of its kind from West Bengal, it is expected, to provide base line data to be used by the future workers.

With deepest sense of gratitude, I express my heartfelt indebtedness to Dr. S. K. Gupta, Jt. Director (Retd.), Zoological survey of India for his sincere guidance, valuable advice, constructive suggestions and constant encouragements all through the work without which it would have been impossible to complete this project.

I wish to record my sincere gratitude and thanks to Dr. A. K. Ghosh, former Director, ZSI for awarding a fellowship and providing laboratory facilities, to Dr. J. R. B. Alfred, Director Zoological Survey of India for providing working facilities in Zoological Survey of India. I owe my sincere gratitude to the authorities of Bidhan Chandra Krishi Viswavidyalaya, Kalyani for allowing me to carry out my work in their orchards. I am specially thankful to Prof. A. K. Somchoudhury & Dr. P. K. Sarkar of the Dept. of Entomology, BCKV Kalyani, for various help and suggestions.

I also would like to record my sincere thanks to Dr. A. K. Sanyal for extending necessary help, to Shri Arun Ghosh for preparing the illustrations, and to Creative Media for undertaking the typing of the Thesis.

Last of all I would like to thank my friends and specially my parents for their continuous support without which this work would not have been possible.

Dated: 17th July 1998

Koyel Chattopadhyay