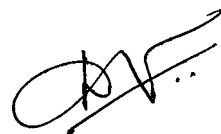


ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Investigations connected with this study were carried out in various institutions like the Department of Botany, S.N.College, Kollam, University Department of Botany, Kariavattom, Tropical Botanic Garden and Research Institute and the Regional Research Laboratory, Pappanamcode. It is not possible to adequately thank all those whose help I received in completing this work. I wish to offer special gratitude and thank the following persons in particular.

- *Dr C A Ninan, former Head of the Department of Botany and Dean, Faculty of Science, University of Kerala and my guide for suggesting this problem and for valuable guidance and encouragement through out the course of this investigation.*
- *Dr N Manilal Kothari, former Head of the Department of Botany, S.N. College for Women, Kollam and my co guide, for valuable guidance, suggestions and advice.*
- *Prof P M Mathew, former Head of the Department of Botany, University of Kerala for critical reading of the entire manuscript and very valuable advice throughout the course of the study.*
- *Dr N Omana kumari, Professor and Head, Department of Botany, University of Kerala and Dr G M Nair, Director TBGRI Palode for permitting me to avail the facilities in the respective research centers.*
- *The Government of Kerala and the UGC for awarding Teacher Fellowship under the Faculty Improvement Programme.*
- *The Manager and Principal, S N College, Kollam, for permitting me to carry out this work in the Department of Botany.*
- *Dr M V Nataraja Panicker, Director, Research Centre, and Dr Priyadarsana Damodara Prasad, Head of the Department of Botany, S.N. College, Kollam for providing all the necessary facilities for my work in the research laboratory.*

- *Dr Vijayaraghavakumaran Nair, Associate Professor of Statistics, College of Agriculture, Vellayani, for valuable help rendered in analyzing the data.*
- *Dr Peter Koshy, Joint Director, RRL, Pappanancode for permitting me to use the SEM.*
- *Smt G Radhamony, (Technical Officer Grade I), Dr G Valsaladevi, (Curator), and Mr Krishna Sait, (Artist Photographer) of the University Department of Botany and Mr Padmesh P, (Scientist B), Mr Reji, (Senior Research Fellow) and Smt Usha (Technical Officer) of the TBGRI, Palode for technical help and support.*
- *Prof T C Rajan, Dr S S Usha, and my friends – Bobby, Jaseela, Vidhu, Narasimhan, for the correction of the manuscript.*
- *Mrs Sreedevi, my friend and colleague for her staunch support and help.*
- *Ms Reji computer center for the service rendered with warmth and care.*
- *Mrs Anjana Sunoj, my dearest sister. She took real pain. I owe a lot to her.*
- *My family : Husband, parents, daughter and niece, for their patience, warmth, love, support and sacrifice at every step of this investigation.*
- *God Almighty, for the choicest blessings.*



DEVI PRIYA V.