ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

During the research and writing of this thesis many individuals have assisted me. I would like to express my gratitude for their generous help. I am sorry that limitation of space prevents me from thanking them individually in this write-up.

At the very outset, I was most fortunate to have a highly imaginative, enterprising and accommodating research guide in Dr. D.N. Fotoder, Professor and Head, Post-Graduate Department of Zoology. His diverse expertise and invaluable suggestions available during the course of this study have made it possible to accomplish this work for which I express my sincere gratitude.

I wish to express my sincere thanks to Professor M.K. Raina and the staff members of this Department whose personal assistance and encouragement was of immense value during this study.

For their customary zeal and willingness to pitch in with proof reading, cite checking, drawing etc my sincere expression of gratitude goes to Dr. Naaz Parveen, Ramesh Bali, Rahul Koul, Musaid Iqbal and Sanjay Dhar - my colleagues in the Department.
I was greatly benefitted from insights of Dr. E. Khan, Division of Nematology, IARI, New Delhi, particularly for his unfailing help in identification of some of the species.

I owe gratitude to Dr. A. Z. Amani, a colleague of mine, for his invigorative and informative discussions.

A role of critical importance was played by U.G.C., New Delhi, whose generous financial support in the form of Junior Research Fellowship and the principal research and Library facilities provided by the Head of the Department helped me through this long and hazardous task.

I am very thankful to Mr. Mohammad Sidiq Dar, for typing this manuscript.

And finally but foremost, my parents' forebearance and help have been most vital ingredients of this thesis. Needless to say that they were a continuous and moving source of inspiration in all my past and present ventures. In fact, I don't have eloquence at my humble command to repay their debts.

( Virender Kaul )