SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The present study is the result of the extensive and systematic field collection trips made to the Peppara and Neyyar Wildlife Sanctuaries in Thiruvananthapuram district of Kerala state resulted in an examination of 550 foliicolous fungal collections made from the study area.

The infected plant parts were collected from the field along with its twig, preferably with flowers and fruits, to facilitate the identity of the host plant. Infection pattern, date of collection, altitude, type of forest, additional information regarding host plant etc. are recorded in the field. Collections were pressed in between the blotters and dried. In the laboratory, nail polish technique (Hosagoudar and Kapoor, 1984) was adopted in order to study the colony characters. In addition to this, 3 are new records to India. The study includes both the fresh collections as well as the collections deposited in Tropical Botanic Garden and Research Institute, Palode, Thiruvananthapuram under TBGT.

Key is provided to the families, genera and species. All the fungal genera and species are arranged alphabetically. The present study resulted in recording 160 taxa belonging to seven genera of meliolaceous fungi, namely, Amazonia (8), Appendiculella (1), Armatella (5), Asteridiella (20), Irenopsis (8), Meliola (117) and Prataprajella (1). There are 9 new species recorded, 3 belonging to Asteridiella and 6 from Meliola. The present study area forms the type locality for 25 species and 2 varieties. In addition to this, there are 3 species reported for the first time from India, 2 are new records to Kerala and one is a rare fungus.

The thesis is divided into ten sections: Introduction, Study Area, Review of literature, Materials and Methods, Structural morphology, Taxonomy, Discussion, Summary and Conclusion, Reference, List of Publications and reprints. Host-Species index are also provided at the end. Modified digital formula of 14 digits are applied for the first time for identifying the species. Individual taxa along with citation, followed by synonym, taxonomic account, materials examined and notes are
provided. These are supplemented with the line drawings and photos, wherever possible. Key is provided to the families, genera and species. All the fungal genera and species are arranged alphabetically.

It is evident from the present study that Peppara and Neyyar Wildlife Sanctuaries are rich in fungal diversity and the host plants, climate and ecosystem in the study area support the luxuriant growth of meliolaceous fungi. Information on the ecology and life histories of fungi and their roles in ecosystem functions are restricted to scientific literature or reports only. They should be included in traditional classroom teaching and should be incorporated into curricula at levels from primary school and into graduate training.