ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am deeply indebted to Dr. C. K. Shah, Head of the Department of Botany, Gujarat University, Ahmedabad for having guided me throughout the course of this study. Indeed, it was only due to his kindness and generous support that I was able to complete this work.

My thanks are due to Dr. A. B. Vyas, Department of Zoology, Gujarat University for his suggestions and encouragement.

Mr. G. D. Vyas, Scientist, Physical Research Laboratory, Ahmedabad deserves my thanks for his encouragement and support.

I have immense pleasure in thanking Mr. Parimanam Pillai, Karnam of the village Panayakurichi who made available all the facilities needed for my field work in his village.

My brother, Rev. Joseph Srinivasan, S.J., Principal of St. Xavier's College, Palayamcottai, Tirunelveli was a source of constant encouragement and support and my thanks are due to him.

I cannot help referring to my beloved wife Kamala and to our dutiful children Joe, Bernie, Tom and Anita who willingly underwent many a privation in order to help me complete this study.

My sincere thanks are due to the Principal and the Management of Jamal Mohamed College, Tiruchirapalli for having deputed me for a one year teacher fellowship and to the University Grants Commission for having granted me the same. My thanks are also due to Devi Educational Institution, Madras-6 for sponsoring this study.

(T.S. Paul Sundar Raj)