ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my deep felt gratitude and indebtedness to Dr. P.K.K. Nair, Director, Environmental Resources Research Centre, Thiruvananthapuram, for guidance, encouragement and advice given to me throughout the course of this investigation.

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the Director, Central Plantation Crop Research Institute (CPCRI), Kasargode for facilitating collection of materials for the investigation.

I owe debt of thanks to the scientific, technical, field and library staffs of Central Plantation Crop Research Institute (CPCRI), Kasargode, Central Plantation Crop Research Institute (CPCRI) Kayamkulam for their support in the collection and authentication of the materials for the study.

My thanks are also due to Dr. G. Kulanthavelu, Head of the Department of Life Science, Madurai Kamaraj University and Dr. Peter Koshy, Joint Director, Regional Research Laboratory, Papanamcode, for their help in carrying out S.E.M. work.

I am indebted to the whole staff of Environmental Resources Research Centre, Thiruvananthapuram and especially to Dr. P.K.Shaji and Dr. S.K. Jayalekshmi, Mr. Roy Chacko, Mr. Solomon for their advice, suggestions and support in the conduct of laboratory investigation.
The work was made possible by the award of teacher fellowship under faculty improvement programme. I thank to the Govt of Kerala, U.G.C., authorities of S.N.Trust and S.N. College for Women, Kollam for facilitating the implementation of the F.I.P.

While, I owe my gratitude to my colleagues friends and others. I may mention the names of Mr. Syam Gopakumar, I Year BFA student, Mrs. S.K. Bindhu, M.G. University, Mr. Radhakrishnan, Vlakkottu House, Chavara, my son Haroon Al Salim and daughter Saira Salim for the assistant and encouragement given in the various activities associated with this work.

The service rendered by the staff of Nirmala DTP Centre & Xerox, as also by Hidas Photos are acknowledged with thanks.

I bow before God Almighty, for the choicest blessing.

Mrs. HANEESA BEEVI, A.