ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am indebted forever to all those who saw me through a difficult journey that made this thesis possible. Above all else, to my parents and brother, for giving me the best that life can offer. To Dr Mewa Singh, for his support and guidance and most of all for giving me a chance...To my friends and colleagues, Lancy D'Souza, Kumara H.N., A.K. Sharma, M.A. Anand, Sushma Rao, Mridula Singh, Courtney Buzzell, Scott Heinrichs, A.Alexander, N.S. Parvathi, Sayana Nair, Cornelia Bertsch and Matt Cooper, for all those shared moments of laughter, encouragement and unstinting help. To Comrade A.K.G. who rushed to my rescue every time I sat down and howled. To all those who provided financial assistance and reference literature and set the cart moving whenever it got stuck---most particularly Theodore Baskaran, CREA-Ramakrishnan, Gireesh Nair, Ravindran Nair, Helga Schulze, Simon Bearder, Chris Knogge, Michelle Sauther, Helena Fitch-Snyder and Tab Rasmussen. To Kimberley Nekaris who introduced me to the world of prosimians and with whom I spent countless exhilarating hours loris-watching. To the people of Ayyalur and the personnel at the forest departments of Ayyalur and Dindigul, especially FRO Rajagopal and DFO Abbas. To J. Jegadheesan, N. Malathi, D. Gopi and R. Adalarasan who took time off to help me with plant identification. And to the lorises, for giving me one of the best times of my life—may your tribe increase.