ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

"Praise the bridge that carried you over"
-George Colman

First and foremost, I express gratitude to The Almighty God, who has blessed me immensely so that I was able to accomplish this task. Immeasurable appreciation and deepest gratitude for the help and support are extended to the following persons who in one or another way have contributed in making this task possible.

It is an honour to acknowledge my deep appreciation to my guide, Prof. B Suresh for his guidance, encouragement and patience, who believed in me and granted me the liberty to perform the research work. His accessible, enthusiastic, transformative and very caring nature makes him so unique. Words can never be enough to thank your kindness.

I convey my deep regards to Dr. Isha Desai, for allowing her precious time to read the thesisand providing me valuable suggestions.You have been a source of inspiration and encouragement. I am extremely lucky to have had your love and guidance throughout this journey.

I am very thankful to the University Grants Commission,New Delhi for providing me the financial assistance in the form of Junior Research fellowship (JRF).

My sincere thanks to The Head, Department of Zoology for providing me with all the necessary facilities to carry out my research work.

A very special thanks to my friends Deepa Menon, Dr.Gowri Uggini and Dr.Saradamba Annasamudram, in you all, I have found a kindred spirit, an encouragement and so much more.I don't think I can ever repay the debt I owe you all. I express my sincere thanks for the guidance and motivation you all rendered during my research period

I am eternally grateful for assistance, cooperation and experience received from my lab mates Pranav Buch, Shashikant Sharma, Sonam Patel, Isha Ranadive during this entire period. They have been an integral part of my journey.I wish a good luck to Pranav, Hiral, Shashi, Sonam, Urja, Isha and Shweta for their future endeavours

I take this opportunity to thank Dr.Pratyush Patankar for all his support and guidance. I am hugely obliged to Dr. Ramesh Verma for being so generous in providing me with materials and giving kind advice regarding my study.I would like to mention here Dr.Mital Ravalji who was always an inspiration for me.

I thank my past lab mates Dr. Hetal Roy and Dr. Anusree Pillai for their support.

It is a pleasure to extend my thankfulness to my teachers Prof. Dolly Kumar, Prof. Pragna Parikh, Dr. Sujatha Pillai, Dr. Bhawana Bharucha, Dr. Prakash Pillai and colleagues Dr. Anika Tere, and Dr. Bhumika Naidu for their very professional, but joyful companionship.

Loving thanks to my friends Sarita Upadhyay, Ankita Parikh, Ansarullah, Archit Trivedi, Asiya Khan, Binal Christian, Aarti Bhadauria, Ketan Prajapati, Chaitali Rana, Kiran Maurya, Ravi Patel, Vidhi Trivedi, Mamta Deb, Reshma Solanki and Suchi Gandhi.

Thanks are also extended to the non-teaching staff of Zoology department who has been quite helpful.

I am thankful to my Parents for all of their support and unceasing encouragement to do my best. Thanks are also due to my beloved brother and sisters for their love and encouragement.

Before closing, I may please be excused if I have unintentionally omitted mentioning certain persons to whom I remain obliged for their help in course of these long years.

Let this humble and small effort serve as a base for more progressive studies in this line in future.

Shailja Rajaram