Acknowledgement

I am highly indebted to "The Almighty" who gave me this special opportunity of pursuing such a study and strength, to overcome the difficulties and bring about its completion.

I would like to express my deep sense of gratitude to Prof. I. Head, Department of Zoology, Dr. A. V. Ramachandran, my guide for his commendable support as a supervisor and philosopher, throughout the course of present investigation. His vibrant and enthusiastic personality and his scholastic attitude towards accepting new challenges in all fields of life has been a source of constant inspiration to me.

I would also like to acknowledge Prof. Bonny Pilo (Former Head, Department of Zoology), for providing necessary facilities for the completion of these investigations.

I owe a special word of thanks to Prof. M. V. Asnani for all the help rendered by her.

I thank Dr. R. G. Panicker for lightening our overworked and tenseful moments with his gifted sense of humour and help in proof reading the text.

I would also like to thank Dr. P. C. Mankodi for providing valuable tips for overcoming difficulties during computing the data.

Technical difficulties in instrumentation are a big problem in working. I thank Dr. K. D. Vachhrajani for helping me overcoming the same and also giving me general encouragement throughout.

I feel highly obliged to Dr. Prof. M. M. Aruldhas, Head, Department of Endocrinology, University of Madras, Taramani, Chennai, for his guidance in the execution of RIA and his co-operation in acquiring the hormone assay kits.

My sincere thanks to Dr. Das and Mr. Nadkarni, Sarabhai Research Centre, Wadiwadi, Baroda, for providing animal and excellent facility for animals maintenance without which carrying out this work would have had been an impossible task to perform. I would also like to extend my gratitude towards Mr. Soni, Mr. Rawal, Mr. Natwarbhai, Mr. Magan Mali and all the animal house staff at SRC.

I would like to acknowledge Dr. Ravindranathan, IPCL, Baroda, for permitting me to use the photomicroscope for my work.

Special thanks to Ms. Bharti Bhavsar for all the help rendered.

I would like to acknowledge my senior colleagues, Dr. C. S. Patel for his special help, Dr. Ami P. Rawal, Dr. D. S. Dandekar and Dr. Anju kurup for help during initial phase of work and Dr. R. V. Devkar for his continuous support.

My heartfelt thanks to my lab-mates, Anubha for being helpful and supportive, Sapna for taking care of all jobs, which nobody else would have done so committedly; Bhavna for lending unflincting help; Aditi for her special timely support; Arpita for giving us a general helping hand;

Praveen for her technical help and Geetika for making lighter moments livelier.

I would also like to thank Mounali, Kinnari, Jignesh, Hitesh, Charlie, Mousami, Yashkamal and Pratyush for rendering help as and when solicited.

Words cannot truly express the regards, which I hold for Biren, for all his tireless help and co-operation rendered during the making of thesis.

I owe a special thanks to Alpesh and Paresh for their innovative suggestions and Dr. Malini, Subbramaniam and Venketesh for all their help in carrying out the RIA.

I would also like to thank Durgesh and Prakash for their sincere assistance.

Thanks are also due, to all teaching and non-teaching staff of my department.

I thank Mr. Shrinivas for his suggestions and help pertaining the scanning of illustrations and printing of the thesis.

Words could not express the debt of gratitude I owe to my parents for their patient endeavours and encouragement without which this work would not have had been possible.

I thank my brother Ankit, sister Neeta and her son baiju for their continuous encouragement. I take this opportunity to thank Bob, Chirag and their family for taking special care of my son in those busy days.

Above all my heartfelt thanks to Utsav, for making this world a beautiful place by his presence.

Unconditional compromise, patience, understanding are the great gifts that my husband has bestowed upon me. I adore him for being with me and what he is and also for all the pains he took, time and again, to come so far to be with us.

For my colleague Sonali,

God sends blessings in disguise, and our working together made us realise it. Without our combined approach and efforts either the beginning or the completion of this work would not have had materialized.

Neyton