

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I deem it a great pleasure to express my deep sense of gratitude and profound indebtedness to Prof. A.V. Ramachandran, for the invaluable guidance and unflagging help and kind words of encouragement apart from the many hours spent with me for the completion of this thesis and also for my overall academic and intellectual growth.

I am thankful to Prof. B. Pilo, Head, Department of Zoology and Co-ordinator of UGC/DRS for the facilities and encouragement rendered to me during the present study.

My sincere thanks are due to Prof. P.M. Ambadkar, former Head, Department of Zoology for providing facilities to carry out the work and for his constant encouragement and help throughout the course of the study.

I also thank Prof. R.V. Shah, former Co-ordinator of UGC/DRS for all the help extended to me.

I harbour a deep sense of gratitude to Prof. A.K. Desai, whose strong motivational force and constant encouragement have contributed a great deal in patient compilation of this thesis.

My special thanks are due, to Dr.(Miss) M.V. Asnani, Reader in Zoology for the help rendered to me throughout the course of the study.

I also thank all my teachers and also the members of the non-teaching staff for the assistance rendered to me in one way or other.

Finally, I am indebted to my parents, sisters, brother and all my dear and near ones for their constant encouragement and moral support.