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Save Those Feathers!

by Juliette Atkinson Monmouth, Oregon

If you were hauling your trash out one day, and someone came up to you and offered you money for it, you'd think they were nuts I'm sure, but not only would you be glad to give up your trash, you'd laugh all the way to the bank!

You've probably seen the ads in the various bird publications, "WANTED - Macaw and parrot feathers - cash for feathers dropped by your birds when they moult." What really made me start saving feathers was the plea by Kevin Schneider that macaw feathers purchased in this country could help save what was left of wild populations from being slaughtered. It seemed criminal to me to crawl around on my hands and knees collecting feathers that for years previous had been raked up as trash and thrown out, with the idea that someone was going to pay me for them...but I did. I stored them in a tall kitchen trash can until a little card from Mr. Schneider reminded me that he hadn't heard from me, and was anxious to do business.

A trip to the local hardware store produced an old draperies rod box that, cut off, was tall enough to hold the longest macaw tail feathers. Into that box went an odd assortment of colorful feathers. A quick note to Mr. Schneider was enclosed explaining that I had no idea what, out of this hodge-podge, would be of any use to him, and further, I hadn't even counted the feathers and would leave the details up to his integrity. It seemed I was hardly back from the post office when an envelope arrived in the mail, and you could have knocked

me over with a feather (pardon the pun) when I found a check for \$158.00 enclosed. Not only had I been paid for the feathers, but every penny of the postage it had cost me had been refunded also!

Several days later we were at a friend's house and I spied a jar of macaw feathers on his shelf. "Are you saving those to send in," I asked. He looked at me like I was nuts. "Those ads in the magazines are all phonies," he said. When I told him about the check we had received, he looked slightly aghast and I'm sure he couldn't wait for us to leave so he could hot-foot it to the post office!

Now to be perfectly honest I would have sent the feathers in anyway, money or no, if they would have saved at least one wild macaw, but to have someone pay me as much as \$10.00 for one tail feather is a side to raising birds I never dreamed of. Mr. Schneider's project is an ambitious one and can only serve to help the birds in the wild; but it is not only macaw feathers he needs. There is a full spectrum of feathers needed, from small birds up to large ones. Mrs. Schneider will provide you with a detailed list upon request. So if there are any of you out there still throwing out feathers because you are skeptical, don't be. You are throwing out cash, but much more important, you could be aiding the cause of wildlife conservation. If you need further information, write: Kevin Schneider, 14292 Jennings Vista Way, Lakeside, CA 92040. ●

Avian Research Awards

by Susan L. Clubb, D.V.M. Miami, Florida

The Avian Research Committee of the American Federation of Aviculture is proud to announce that funds are available for research grants in 1985. Areas of primary interest include avian nutrition, infectious diseases, disease control techniques, diagnostic procedures, preventative medicine, incubation and artificial insemination techniques, field studies and general avicultural techniques. Preference is given to studies dealing with species important in aviculture.

All proposals will be reviewed by committee members and consultants knowledgeable in each field. All proposals must be scientifically sound and feasible. Preference will be given to members of AFA.

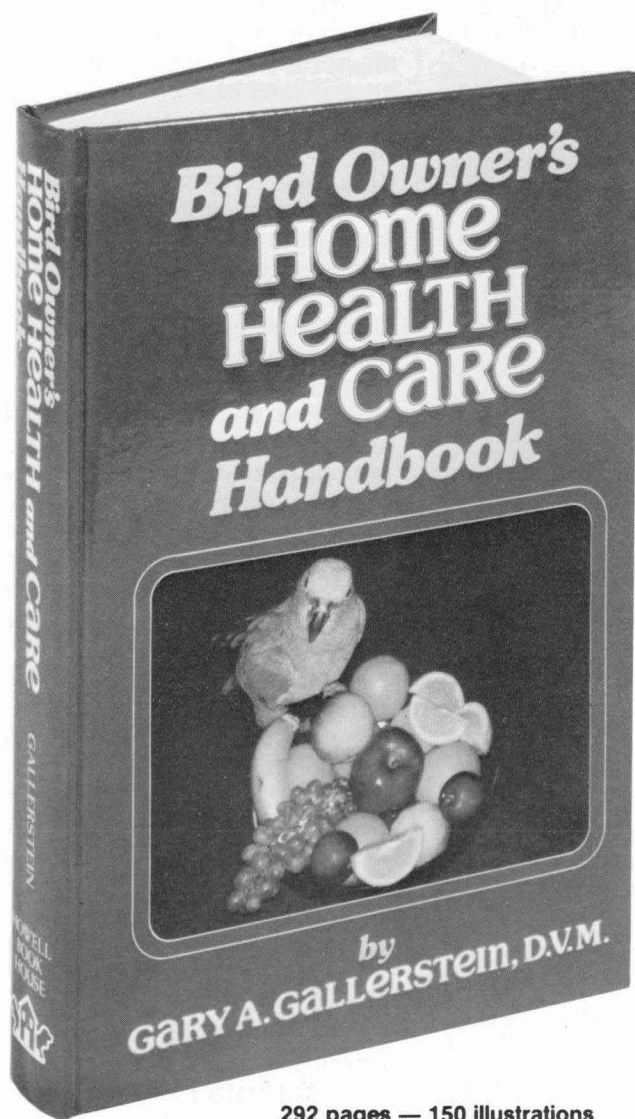
The deadline for receiving applications is June 1, 1985. All applications must be submitted on AFA Research Grant Application forms. Grants will be awarded at the AFA National Convention in San Francisco, CA, August 7-11, 1985. All grant recipients will make brief quarterly reports to the research committee. Results will be reported in the AFA "Watchbird".

A brief letter of intent should be submitted with a request for application forms to Susan L. Clubb, DVM, 5122 S.W. 128 Place, Miami, FL 33175.

Any donation large or small will be appreciated and will go directly into the research fund. Send your donations to: AFA Research Fund, P.O. Box 1568, Redondo Beach, CA 90279. ●

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