NO SURE CURE FOR FEATHER PICKING

There is no sure cure for feather picking, as it may be caused by any number of reasons. However, I will discuss the primary problems and recommended cures.

Proper nutrition is most important, and lack of it is probably hardest to detect, since long periods of time are involved. Birds go through various periods of life, such as breeding and moulting, which make severe demands upon the bird's physical system. A basic, correct diet is a must for the species of bird. This includes the correct seed mixes, greens, fruits, live food, etc., for your species of bird. With regard to seeds, some basic considerations are: sunflower, grey stripe is better than black; Canary — Moroccan is the most nutritious; millet-large seeds, live? Will it germinate? Taste it. Is it fresh? Look at it. Is it shiny?

Environmental considerations are cage size, cage height, and bathing requirements. A cage can be either too large or too small, especially when considering direction of normal bird flight and the bird's wing span. Height of the cage is important too, since most birds fly up to get away from danger. Waist high to head high is recommended. Bathing requirements are very important for feather care. Does the bird take an immersion bath in a bowl, such as a stream bather, or does the bird prefer a spray mist bath, such as would be obtained in a light rain or under cover during a heavy rain. I recommend a mixture of ½ listerine and ½ water, also a mixture of water. However, be careful with forced baths, asphyxiate your birds with spraying. Bathing requirements are very important for feather care.

Parasitic problems involve mites and lice. Lice are easily visible with the naked eye. However, mites are more difficult to detect. Place a white cloth over the cage at night. Remove the cloth in the very early morning. Look for black specks. If found, rub the specks. If bloody specks appear, you have mites. Scrub the cage once a week. Scrub and clean the perches. Do not immerse the perches in water. Spray and/or dust the bird with a non-toxic Pyrethin. Use a metal cased "Bird Protector" on the cage — this works like a flea collar on a dog.

Remember, any changes made in trying to correct feather picking should be made in moderation, and should be kept up for at least three months. Do not asphyxiate your birds with spraying, or starve your birds by withdrawing their regular feed in favor of a recommended feathering feed. Any changes should be made in moderation or the result may be worse rather than better.

Interested in Love Birds?
Join the newly forming AFRICAN LOVE BIRD SOCIETY dedicated to the study and breeding of lovebirds.
For information write to Lee Horton 2376 Bella Vista, Vista, CA. 92083

REWARD! Forty Canaries, mostly red and orange factor crested, were taken from the aviaries of Frank Raleigh on November 12, 1975. Birds banded with red bands, initials: D.R. Numbers 150 to 350 year 1975. $200.00 Reward offered for information. Contact Frank Raleigh, 13729 Ardis Ave., Bellflower, California.