



# LOVE BUGS

THE INSECTS,  
FLORA, AND FAUNA OF A  
NEW YORK ISLAND  
IN SUMMER INSPIRED A  
MARTHA STEWART WEDDINGS  
STYLIST AND HER GROOM  
TO CREATE A  
CELEBRATION FULL OF WILD,  
WONDERFUL DETAILS.

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SUMMER 2017  
MARTHASTEWARTWEDDINGS.COM



## SUMMER LOVE

Samuel Crane, who wore a custom Indochino suit and a silk-knit tie, and Katie Covington, in a Delphine Manivet dress, shared a preceremony kiss.



# T

here's a certain magic that occurs at the intersection of art and science. When the two meet, wondrous things are created—architectural marvels, groundbreaking installations, even great love.

Samuel Crane, a data scientist and self-professed “insect obsessive,” met Catherine “Katie” Covington, then a jewelry designer and now the senior style editor at *Martha Stewart Weddings*, on a winter day in 2011. The pair had a drink at his favorite Brooklyn cocktail bar; she charmed him with her creativity and wit, and he impressed her with his logical nature, his sense of humor... and his special access to the Morgan Memorial Hall of Gems at the American Museum of Natural History, where he was doing Ph.D. studies. Drinks led to dinner, and “I promptly set up the next date,” says Samuel.

Four years later, after asking Katie's father for his blessing, Samuel proposed during a romantic trip to New Orleans. They decided on a destination wedding to Shelter Island, nestled between the two forks of Long Island, New York, where they rented out the Ram's Head Inn—a quaint family-owned-and-operated property on the island's east side. “We love how wild the island is and wanted a botanical theme for the wedding,” says Katie. No stranger to research, Samuel uncovered a book on the local flora and fauna and then scoured the online Biodiversity Heritage Library for images of native animals and plants that would be in season in late summer. Katie then used them to design elements that appeared throughout the celebration,

beginning with the save-the-dates. “Everything featured was actually on the island, with the exception of the blue cranes, a nod to Samuel's last name,” she says. The pair also created a local field guide, which was tucked into welcome bags along with binoculars “so everyone could be their own naturalist,” says Katie.

All those details set the scene for their outdoor ceremony, held on September 10, 2016, overlooking Coecles Harbor. During cocktail hour, guests found their seats for the alfresco dinner via another collaborative creation: a table of escort cards featuring colorful preserved insects, which also doubled as favors. Samuel had spent months gathering them from collectors, and they were a huge hit—inspiring guests to think creatively about nature-as-décor, too. “They all have them displayed in clever ways in their homes,” says Katie. “Now, whenever we go over, they're like, ‘Want to see my bug?’”

## SUPER NATURAL

**1.** Working with letterpress company Bella Figura, Katie designed the invitation suite, which featured plants and animals found on Shelter Island, sent in envelopes calligraphed by her mom, Mary. **2.** Bejeweled bug rings, on loan from designer Daniela Villegas, served as Katie's “something borrowed.” **3.** Welcome bags included a field guide to the native wildlife, binoculars for bird-watching, and bottled cocktails. **4.** The couple's close friends from college and New York made up the wedding party. **5.** Gifts for the groomsmen included a cigar and cigar cutter, as well as vintage pocketknives. **6.** The bride's mother helped her get ready.



“I guess this gives me a couple more days to go through my fascinating insect-story files and pull out some real winners.”

—SAMUEL'S JOKE TO KATIE OVER EMAIL, RETOLD DURING THEIR CEREMONY, AFTER SHE POSTPONED THEIR FIRST DATE





“He is generous, calm, thoughtful, and fun. I’ve never had to guess how he feels about me, because he has always shown me with his actions.”

—KATIE, ON SAMUEL



“I DO” DETAILS

1. An antique tin originally meant to hold scientific specimens was transformed into a ring box with the addition of velvet cushioning. Katie designed both of the wedding bands herself. 2. Dried chamomile and calendula were packaged in test tubes and handed out to guests preceremony to toss as the couple recessed down the aisle. 3. Katie gave each of the women on her mother’s side of the family a handkerchief that had once belonged to her maternal grandmother. 4. Twins Hudson and Milo, sons of the couple’s friends, served as ring bearers. **Opposite:** Katie’s bouquet, created by *Martha Stewart Weddings* style director Naomi deMañana, included wildflowers picked fresh from the island and a selection of blooms sourced from FiftyFlowers.





## BEETLE MANIA

**1.** The bride played bocce with Charlotte, the couple's niece, who served as flower girl. **2.** The escort-card table featured 54 different insect species, held in place with pins. **3.** Guests found their names and table numbers on the front of the cards, and the taxonomic name, common name, and place of origin for each bug on the back. **4.** Signature cocktails—an Americano, made with Campari, red vermouth, and soda water; and a classic lime-and-rum daiquiri—were served in vintage glassware. **5.** Centerpieces featured gomphrena, scabiosa, garden roses, lilies, yarrow, delphiniums, clematis, and bachelor buttons. **Opposite:** Place settings included napkins Katie hand-dyed as well as menus she designed.





## INN LOVE

**1.** Guests dined beneath the Ram's Head Inn's canopy of trees, then moved inside for dancing. "Since our friends stayed at the inn, we kept the party going late, and people just drifted off to bed when they were ready," says Katie. **2.** *Martha Stewart Weddings* contributor Jason Schreiber created a fondant-covered cake decorated with flowers, butterflies, and bugs for the couple to cut (they also served a lemon sheet cake). **3.** Samuel and his mother, Lavina, danced to Tim McGraw's "Humble and Kind."



# KATIE AND SAMUEL'S SHELTER ISLAND SHINDIG

## DRESS DETAILS

Of her Delphine Manivet dress, Katie says, "I liked how structured it was, that it had pockets, and that it was a great shape for twirling." A few weeks before the wedding, her maid-of-honor and best friend returned from a trip to Portugal with a gift of vintage silk-embroidered flower patches. "I thought they would be pretty 'some things blue,' so I pinned them inside my dress."

## ODES TO JOY

For the ceremony, a DJ played classical pieces selected by Samuel. "The songs really communicate happiness and set a sunny, uplifting tone," he says. For the recessional, the couple chose a more recent hit, setting the mood for the reception.

### Prelude

"Lieder ohne Worte," book 6, op. 67: 1–5, by Felix Mendelssohn

### Processional

"An der Schönen, Blauen Donau," op. 314, by Johann Strauss II

### Bride's Entrance

"IV: Jupiter, the Bringer of Jollity," from *The Planets*, op. 32, by Gustav Holst

### Recessional

"Wouldn't It Be Nice," by the Beach Boys

## RING QUEST

"I never doubted it was the right step," Samuel says about his decision to propose—but with Katie's background in jewelry design, his biggest worry was finding a ring she'd love. After a bit of snooping on her social-media accounts, he found Erie Basin, a local jewelry shop she liked that specializes in one-of-a-kind designs. "They put a photo of a new ring up on Instagram, and I hopped on my bike during lunch break and paid for it that day," he says of the east-west diamond and yellow-gold design. The proposal in New Orleans soon followed, and Katie loved the ring. "In fact, I think the first thing she said was, 'You got a good one!'" says Samuel.

**"The symbolic vows you are about to make are a way of saying to one another, 'You know all those things we've promised, and hoped, and dreamed—well, I meant it all, every word.'"**

FROM "UNION," BY ROBERT FULGHUM,  
READ BY KATIE'S MOTHER, MARY, DURING THE CEREMONY

## Honeymoon Dispatch

The couple left the Monday after their wedding for a two-week honeymoon to Greece and Spain. They began in Athens, taking in ancient sights like the Parthenon before heading to Santorini, where they checked into *Ikies Traditional Houses* (*ikies.com*), a boutique property with cave houses tucked into the cliffs along the island's famous caldera. "We loved taking meandering walks past the wild jasmine, olive trees, and grapevines—the wine there is excellent," Samuel says. Then it was on to Barcelona and a stay at *Hotel Brummell* (*hotelbrummell.com*), where the couple enjoyed eating "amazing breakfasts on the beautiful open-air patio," says Katie. Favorite things included a visit to the Fundació Joan Miró, a tour of Antoni Gaudí's Sagrada Família, and paella on the beach.

## Behind the Bottle

In welcome bags, the couple included a bottled "Sapsucker" cocktail, a bitter Cappelletti- and vermouth-based drink named for the local yellow-bellied sapsucker that has been known to become intoxicated from the fermented sap it eats. Samuel tested five recipes before deciding upon the perfect blend:

**The Sapsucker** (for a double, in a 6-oz. glass bottle)

1.5 oz. Suze  
2.5 oz Cappelletti  
2 oz sweet vermouth  
Mix, then serve on the rocks with an optional top-off of soda.

## SOURCES

**Location and catering** The Ram's Head Inn **Wholesale flowers** FiftyFlowers **Photography** Thayer Allyson Gowdy **Officiant** Bettina Yiannakourou **Stationery printing** Bella Figura (invitations); Wedding Paper Divas (save-the-dates) **Cake** Jason Schreiber **Music** DJ Kernsy **Rentals** Party Rental Ltd. **Bride's gown** Delphine Manivet from Bhdn **Bride's accessories** Jennifer Behr (crown); Alexandre Birman (shoes); Rosanne Pugliese (earrings); Daniela Villegas (rings); Erie Basin (engagement ring) **Hair** Melisande Page for Beauty Exchange NYC **Makeup** Moani Lee for Beauty Exchange NYC **Bridesmaid's dress** Zimmermann **Flower-girl dress** Señorita Lemoniez **Groom's suit and shirt** Indochino **Groom's accessories** J.Crew (tie); Allen Edmonds (shoes)

## By the Numbers

**1929**  
The year the Ram's Head Inn was built

**150**  
Napkins Katie hand-dyed for reception tables

**10**  
Pounds of chamomile and calendula used to fill ceremony-toss tubes

**2004**  
Year OkCupid, the dating site where the couple first connected, launched. Samuel's handle was "curculio," a reference to the beetle he studied while getting his Ph.D.

**2**  
Number of hairstyles Katie unexpectedly wore due to humidity and wind

**8**  
Species of plants and animals featured on the couple's invitation

**5**  
Former or current *Martha Stewart* employees at the wedding

## BOOK REPORT

One of the largest sources of inspiration for the couple was *A Nature Journal: A Naturalist's Year on Long Island*, which includes 155 paintings of the region's plants and wildlife by Dennis Puleston, an area naturalist who also cofounded the Environmental Defense Fund.