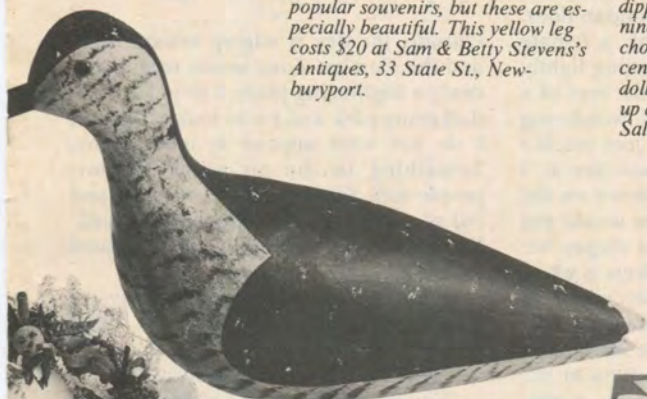
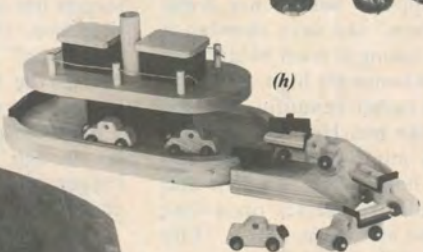


**Birds in the hand (e)**  
Hand-carved wooden birds are among the North Shore's most popular souvenirs, but these are especially beautiful. This yellow leg costs \$20 at Sam & Betty Stevens's Antiques, 33 State St., Newburyport.



**Meltdown (g)**  
Harbor Sweets is famous throughout the North Shore for its hand-dipped chocolates. A gift box of nineteen individually wrapped chocolates, with pecan and caramel centers and embossed with a sand dollar, costs \$8. You can pick one up at Harbor Sweets, 85 Leavitt St., Salem.



**Eat and run (f)**  
For ten years Melissa Smith owned the popular Easterly Inn in Gloucester. She now runs her own real-estate agency, but you can still sample her delicious recipes for Cape Ann blueberry cake, steamed Essex clams, and Joe Frogger cookies. They're all printed on brightly colored index cards that come in their own Lucite recipe box. The whole package is available for \$6 from the Toad Hall Bookstore, 51 Main St., Rockport.

**Ferry Nice (h)**  
Artist Tim Tucker-Runnon sells his handcrafted toy creations to Nieman-Marcus, F.A.O. Schwarz, and the Joppa General Store. This ferry boat-and-car set costs \$35. You can see it and similar items at the Joppa General Store, 8 Market Sq., Newburyport.

**Hang on sloop-y (i)**  
After a summer or two at the beach house, any director's chair begins to look beat. The prescription? A set of new covers with an attractive silk-screened sloop pattern. Covers for one chair cost \$17 at Marblehead Hand Prints, 86 Washington St., Marblehead. They're also available by mail order for \$20.

**High horse (j)**  
In an age of toys that whistle and whirl, old-fashioned hobby horses are a vanishing species. This one, four feet long and sporting a calico head, costs \$7 at Bruni Farms, 24 Essex Rd., Ipswich.

## Day of the Greenheads

An update on the North Shore's most unwelcome visitor



By John Sedgwick

If you head up to Crane's Beach or Plum Island to beat the heat this summer, expect company. And not the kind that arrives in cars, although there will probably be plenty of that, too. The visitors we're talking about will fly in. And they won't be coming for the sunbeams, either. They'll be coming for you.

They're greenheads—a perennial North Shore pest. Breeding by the billion in the North Shore's five thousand acres of marshland, the greenhead fly has a hard, metallic green head, a long, sharp beak, and a craving for blood. Their bite actually takes a chunk out of you, raises a welt, and hurts like a bee sting. While just one of these creatures is enough to ruin your whole afternoon, they usually set upon you in clusters, a dozen at a time, often more. They are generally thickest from the last week in July through the first week in August, although a heat wave could bring them out sooner. Because they need moisture to survive, the greenheads boogie out to Plum Island, Crane's Beach, and Weemacook at precisely those times that people do—on hot, dry, windless days. What's more, the greenheads find wet, scantily clad humans particularly enticing. And no insect repellent can stop them.

Can't anything be done about the blasted bugs? In fact, something is being done. A tiny state-run organization called the North Shore Greenhead Control Project has placed several hundred strange-looking green boxes up on poles around the marsh to trap the greenheads. For a time it looked as if the boxes would actually do away with the little beasts. It doesn't look that way anymore.

Larry Uhrich, who designed the boxes, reports that they caught an average of 15,000 greenheads per week when they were first set up in 1970, and North Shore residents hoped that the boxes might catch larger numbers of flies each summer. That hope, alas, was short lived. The counts diminished the next year and every year after that.

The worst part is that this probably is just as well, for Uhrich has discovered that the greenheads hold in check an even worse menace: deerflies. While greenheads are certainly annoying, deerflies are nasty. They don't just pepper your ankles, like greenheads. They go for your head. They draw a stream of blood. They even spread diseases. Uhrich, then, is reconciled to seeing the greenheads "contained" but not eradicated. "During those peak weeks, the seashore is just going to be a tough place to be," he says. "We might as well resign ourselves to it." □