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Balancing On Blue : A Thru-Hiking Adventure On The Appalachian Trail



Synopsis

A #1 Best-Seller. Shortlisted for Outdoor Book of the Year by The Great Outdoors Magazine. The third book from Keith Fosskett. Every year several thousand people attempt to hike all 2180 miles of the Appalachian Trail in the eastern United States. Being the first of the big three hikes in America, it is where long-distance hikers go to cut their teeth. Keith Fosskett has another reason. Dromomania, or the uncontrollable urge to wander, has been part of his life since childhood. Hiking is his chosen method to placate the wanderlust. Accompanied by an array of eclectic characters including a world champion juggler, a drug dealer, an Everton fan whose visa is expiring and a sex-starved builder from Minnesota, his experience is far from normal. Battling a fear of snakes, bears, being in the woods after dark and his own demons, it's physically exhausting -- as well as a psychologically challenging. His adventure weaves a route through some of America's wildest landscapes and history, and is told with insight, humour and reflection. 'Be prepared for great story telling, unique and interesting characters, humour and insight.' Andrew Skurka - National Geographic Adventurer of the Year. 'A highly anticipated Appalachian Trail Memoir, and well worth the wait.' Daniel Neilson - The Great Outdoors Magazine. 'Essential reading for those contemplating their own big adventure.' David Lintern - Outdoor Enthusiast Magazine. 'The wilds of this planet are serene, peaceful and offer the chance to break away from a normal existence. Keith's book wonderful perspective of the trail reflects this freedom.' Jennifer Pharr Davis - Author and past record holder for the fastest ever hike of the Appalachian Trail.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I have read all three of Mr. Foskett's books. In a row. In the same week. Very compelling reading. The author elevates the average thru-hike memoir with a wonderful sense of story-telling. The reader gets to understand the terrain, the beauty, the wonder; rather than just a daily re-hash of a trail journal (as interesting as those can be). Recommended to anyone who is thinking of such an undertaking or for those of us who can only experience such things vicariously. So, why not 5 stars? The author's habit of denigrating those who are only out for a day, or possibly just a peek at the trail. Fortunately, these nasty digressions are brief and rare. It would be fine if everyone could walk and walk and walk as the author has. It would be great if everyone could be gifted with the health and ability to pick up for six or more months to pursue such an epic hike. However, and sadly, this is not the case. Some of us venture a mile or so up the trail, up the stairs, out of breath, just to get a glimpse of what the author has the health to accomplish and the skill to write so blithely about. Next time you see the middle-aged "out of shape", overweight woman slowing down your thru-hike, keep in mind this may be her dream to just walk that mile, struggle up those stairs, because injury or illness means that is the best she can do. To walk a mile on a trail may be just as big an accomplishment to her as completing thousands of miles is to the author. Comments such as yours is why many would rather not attempt at all rather than face the scorn and ridicule such as the author exhibits on occasion.

I'll admit to having a slight crush on this fella. That may color my review...Confessions aside, I appreciate Keith's writing style and I like that he accurately portrays (in my opinion) trail life. The only thing that surprises me a bit is the lack of trouble with his feet (good genes?) I honestly have no idea why his trail narratives don't get bigger play. I would have much preferred a movie about Keith's trail adventures over a certain girl, whom I will not name. Maybe he could spruce things up by sleeping with strangers on the CDT. Jokes aside, I think that his work is a must-read before you hit the trail. While you won't get gear advice (trust me everyone else has an opinion on this so you won't be bereft without Keith's,) you'll get a good idea of what trail life feels like in your heart. What it feels like physically...well, you'll have to go on a long time for that.

Maybe three and a half stars. Maybe I've read too many Appalachian Trail books; after a while, most of them seem pretty much the same. Keith Fosskett starts and ends his book with biographical sketches of the individuals he hikes with on the trail. That's a change. For Fossie, long distance hiking is part of his life style and he philosophizes about this and the meaning of the trail throughout the book. The account of his hike is straightforward and fairly interesting, perhaps aided by his English (not British) perspective. There are some errors (like Goreham, NH). Not great, but a solid narrative of an Appalachian Trail adventure.

I'm somewhat of a compulsive reader. Lit degree. Business writing background. I spend a lot of time around words. Over the last couple of months, I've read many of the thru hiking books available here on Kindle. At first, I was only looking for AT stories. Balancing on Blue was in the initial rounds of purchases. Very solid writing. While I will instantly recommend several other treatments of an AT thru hike currently available on , I think Fossie is probably the best writer in the group. He's strong with description, and has a good feeling for working all of the senses into the settings he presents as he moves along the trail. The first person writing, while autobiographical, made me feel like I was following the adventures of a fictional character. Fosskett knows he's a complicated guy, and he's willing to share his inner dialog with readers as he pushes his body to insane limits and deals with miserable weather, mother nature, wild animals, humans, and every other obstacle the AT throws at him. I've since read his other two books and I highly recommend both. Since I'm writing this in the weeks before Christmas, it occurs to me that buying all three books for someone is a great gift idea. I await this dude's next book.

It's a good read I enjoyed it if your thinking an out walking the AT this book will give you a look at what it will be like out on the trail,or if you can't walk it you get a look into the journey the writer took on his through hike from the highs when things go right ,and the lowes when they dont

This is definitely one of my favorite Appalachian Trail reads. It draws great descriptive pictures of his hike. I felt like I was right there. It is also a very easy read and thoroughly enjoyable.The trail is on my bucket list and this book just made it that much of a stronger "need to do" adventure.Thank you Keith, really a great read.

The author has the ability to take you with him on his hike north along the Appalachian trail. You experience each day as he and trail buddies explore this magnificent trail. I recommend this book to all that have the sense of adventure.

I love all of Keith's books, but this one is definitely my favorite. I love his writing style; it's candid but not so much so that you feel like you're reading straight out of someone's diary. And it's funny in the same vein as Bryson's work... but different enough that you don't feel like you're reading *A Walk in the Woods Part Two* or anything of that sort. All in all, it was a delight to go on this journey with Fozzie and I hope he writes more soon because I'm done tearing through all of his books and thirsty for more!! Fozzie: if you read your own reviews, what books do YOU recommend that are great trekking memoirs? I need the goods in the meantime while you're (you'd better be!) writing your next book!

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