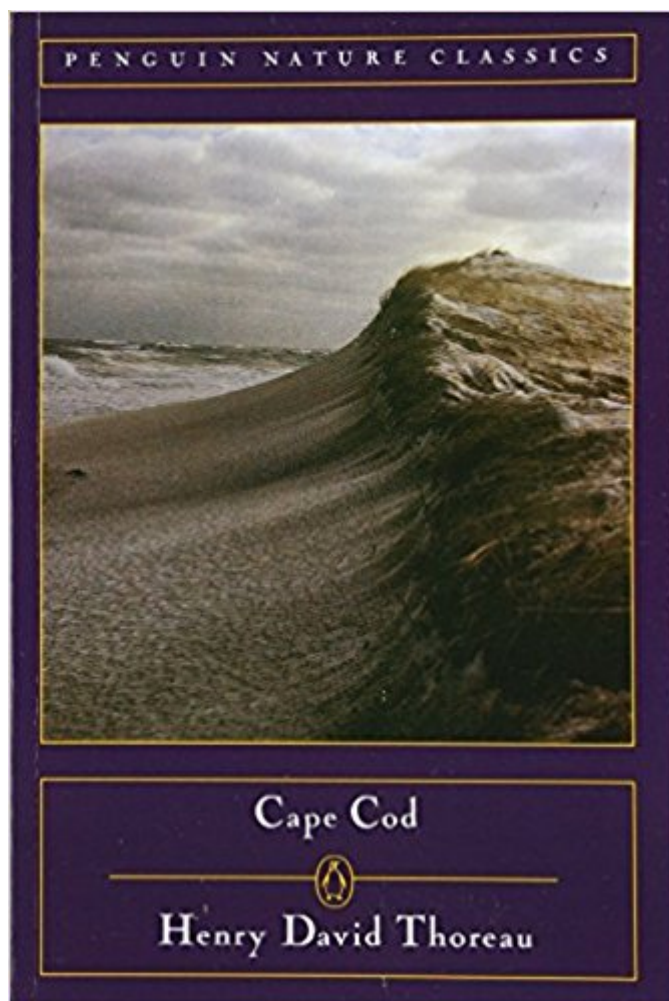


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# Cape Cod (Penguin Nature Library)



## Synopsis

Thoreau's classic account of his meditative, beach-combing walking trips to Cape Cod in the early 1850s, reflecting on the elemental forces of the sea, with an introduction by Paul Theroux. Cape Cod chronicles Henry David Thoreau's journey of discovery along this evocative stretch of Massachusetts coastline, during which time he came to understand the complex relationship between the sea and the shore. He spent his nights in lighthouses, in fishing huts, and on isolated farms. He passed his days wandering the beaches, where he observed the wide variety of life and death offered up by the ocean. Through these observations, Thoreau discovered that the only way to truly know the sea—its depth, its wildness, and the natural life it contained—was to study it from the shore. Like his most famous work, *Walden*, Cape Cod is full of Thoreau's unique perceptions and precise descriptions. But it is also full of his own joy and wonder at having stumbled across a new frontier so close to home, where a man may stand and leave all America behind him. •Part of the Penguin Nature Library—edited by Edward Hoagland. For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

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## Customer Reviews

"Cape Cod is Thoreau's sunniest, happiest book. It bubbles over with jokes, puns, tall tales, and

genial good humor. . . . Unquestionably the best book that has ever been written about Cape Cod, and it is the model to which all new books about the Cape are still compared."--Walter Harding, *The Days of Henry Thoreau* --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

Henry David Thoreau was born in Concord, Massachusetts in 1817. He graduated from Harvard in 1837, the same year he began his lifelong Journal. Inspired by Ralph Waldo Emerson, Thoreau became a key member of the Transcendentalist movement that included Margaret Fuller and Bronson Alcott. The Transcendentalists' faith in nature was tested by Thoreau between 1845 and 1847 when he lived for twenty-six months in a homemade hut at Walden Pond. While living at Walden, Thoreau worked on the two books published during his lifetime: *Walden* (1854) and *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers* (1849). Several of his other works, including *The Maine Woods*, *Cape Cod*, and *Excursions*, were published posthumously. Thoreau died in Concord, at the age of forty-four, in 1862. Paul Theroux, an internationally acclaimed travel writer, is also the author of over two dozen novels and works of non-fiction. He divides his time between Cape Cod and the Hawaiian Islands.

This is a comment about the edition rather than the book: I bought this edition based on the review about the very helpful index. Please be careful about what edition you are actually buying. Many of these reviews are about different editions. I bought the BiblioLife paperback book with a picture of the green bicycle on the cover. I just received it and there is NO INDEX. It looks like the original text from an original printing (with smaller physical dimensions) was photocopied page by page and put into this paperback book. This will do the trick but I am a little disappointed and wish I had bought a different edition. It is confusing on because when you click "look inside" it shows an index, with a tiny note saying the "look inside" refers to a different edition.

Most people are familiar with Thoreau through his *Walden*. Few know perhaps that he didn't stay put in Concord but journeyed to the *Maine Woods* and elsewhere, and that these travels were formative of his philosophy and ideas. Thoreau believed the Maine wilderness north of Bangor was every bit as wild as the west and other far flung corners of the continent in the 1850s, and here he shows us an incredible panorama of beauty and wonder. You will gain insight into how Native Americans hunted Moose in the mid-19th Century and why Thoreau, a vegetarian, disdained the killing of animals for meat. One of the most striking passages is his description of the sound of a huge tree falling in the forest in the distance at night. In *Ktaadn*, Thoreau defines the essence of

wilderness: "Nature was here something savage and awful, though beautiful. I looked with awe at the ground I trod on, to see what the Powers had made there, the form and fashion and material of their work. This was that Earth of which we have heard, made out of Chaos and Old Night. Here was no man's garden, but the unhandselled globe. It was not lawn, nor pasture, nor mead, nor woodland, nor lea, nor arable, nor wast-land. It was the fresh and natural surface of the planet Earth as it was made forever and ever." You do not need to read *The Maine Woods* on a wooded island in Maine (as I did) to be captivated and transported by it to a higher and greater sense of wilderness than you may ever have imagined.

...no doubt about him. He leaves no grain (of sand) unturned. It has been decades since I first read this work and many years since I have had the pleasure of being at the Cape. All the memories come flooding back through his excellent narrative. I am glad I took the time to revisit this work, especially that I am older and in less of a hurry.

This hardcover edition from Peninsula Press is unquestionably the best available edition of Thoreau's *Cape Cod*, for these reasons: 1) While all other editions are based on Thoreau's journal entries from only his first three visits to the Cape, this edition includes an epilogue compiling Thoreau's notes from his fourth and final visit, in which he traveled south to Chatham and Monomoy. 2) This is the only edition to translate the many, many Greek and Latin phrases Thoreau includes throughout the work, and it is also the only edition to provide illustrations, maps, and sidenotes in-text. 3) This is the only indexed edition ever created. **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED** for fans of both Cape literature and Thoreau in general.

Thoreau's knowledge and descriptions of the natural world provide wonderful insights about living with nature and remind me of how much we have forgotten about surviving and thriving in the wild. As he and his companion packed their several hundred pounds of provisions, in preparation for their month long, 300 mile journey through the Maine wilderness, their Indian guide came equipped with a hatchet, a rifle and a blanket. And Thoreau was considered an expert woodsman.

Great read, and this version has some nice illustrations throughout. The cover is actually plain blue (on mine, at least) which I'm perfectly okay with since it gives it a nice vintage feel.

An excellent read on my Kindle! Thanks!

Written very well, but some what difficult to read in the phrases of that time period. I'm about halfway thru the book but have gone on to another book. I will return and finish this book. Always good to keep books in the " Library".

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