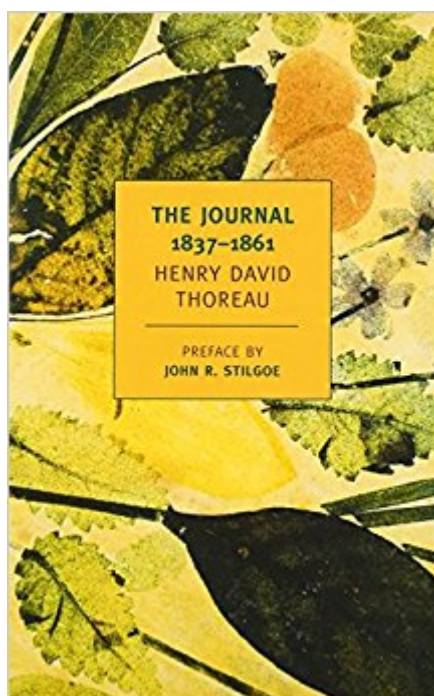


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# The Journal Of Henry David Thoreau, 1837-1861 (New York Review Books Classics)



## Synopsis

Henry David Thoreau's Journal was his life's work: the daily practice of writing that accompanied his daily walks, the workshop where he developed his books and essays, and a project in its own right—one of the most intensive explorations ever made of the everyday environment, the revolving seasons, and the changing self. It is a treasure trove of some of the finest prose in English and, for those acquainted with it, its prismatic pages exercise a hypnotic fascination. Yet at roughly seven thousand pages, or two million words, it remains Thoreau's least-known work. This reader's edition, the largest one-volume edition of Thoreau's Journal ever published, is the first to capture the scope, rhythms, and variety of the work as a whole. Ranging freely over the world at large, the Journal is no less devoted to the life within. As Thoreau says, "It is in vain to write on the seasons unless you have the seasons in you."

## Book Information

Series: New York Review Books Classics

Paperback: 704 pages

Publisher: NYRB Classics; Original edition (November 24, 2009)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 159017321X

ISBN-13: 978-1590173213

Product Dimensions: 5 x 1.4 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.5 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 18 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #47,924 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #24 in Books > Biographies &

Memoirs > Regional U.S. > Mid Atlantic #41 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs >

Professionals & Academics > Environmentalists & Naturalists #97 in Books > Literature & Fiction > United States > Anthologies

## Customer Reviews

Thoreau began keeping a journal at age 20, ultimately filling 14 notebooks and a collection he titled "Gleanings; or, What Time Has Not Reaped of My Journal." Writer, editor, and translator Searls selected passages from this vast sea of words to create the largest and most cohesive one-volume reader's edition ever published. Thoreau's journal was the wellspring for all his books, and Searls is acutely attuned to its grand continuity and

“synthesizing quality, ensuring that readers will be able to fully appreciate Thoreau’s sustained contemplation of the cycles, patterns, and interconnectivity of nature. What is also apparent is how the rhythms and revelations of Thoreau’s long walks inspired the flow and radiance of his poetic prose. Searls’s sensitive editing casts new light on Thoreau’s abiding fascination with weather, trees, turtles, the moon, birds, berries, and, of course, human nature. Observant, philosophical, and rhapsodic, Thoreau parses his own moods, portrays friends and neighbors, decries slavery and the destruction of the living world, and rejoices in beauty. This is a superb and uniquely accessible edition of an essential American masterpiece.”  
--Donna Seaman

"[Searls's selection] admirably preserves the feel of the 7,000-page original. This lightweight, sturdy edition ... practically begs to be read outside." —Thomas Meaney, *Times Literary Supplement* "...we are richer now that Damion Searls has unearthed new Thoreauvian treasures for the rest of us -- a 10th of the two-million-word journal, far more than ever before available in a single volume. Here, in some of the most vigorous and original prose in English, we find the origins of "Walden" and the other books, but we also find that the journal was a work of art in itself." —Michael Sims, *The Washington Post* "Writer, editor, and translator Searls selected passages from this vast sea of words to create the largest and most cohesive one-volume reader's edition ever published... This is a superb and uniquely accessible edition of an essential American masterpiece." —Booklist "Damion Searls has found and freed the lean, shapely and modern American classic inside the very definition of a 'baggy monster.'" —Christopher Lydon, *Open Source Radio* "More than any previous version, it allows a direct encounter with this great work and approximates the experience of reading the whole. In fact, by clearing away some of the underbrush in the fourteen volumes, it highlights the better-known passages and uncovers hidden gems and significant connections." —Geoff Wisner, *The Quarterly Conversation* "It is the unflagging beauty of the writing, day after day, that confirms its greatness among writers' journals." —Alfred Kazin "Thoreau could lift a fish out of the stream with his hands; he could charm a wild squirrel to nestle in his coat; he could sit so still that the animals went on with their play round him. [In the Journal] we have a chance of getting to know Thoreau as few people are known, even by their friends." —Virginia Woolf "Reading Thoreau's Journal I discover any idea I've ever had worth its salt." —John Cage

Having finished reading it, I now use it as a day book picking it up a few times each week to read Thoreau's wisdoms and witticisms. Yes I said witticisms. Reading it is like going along with Henry on his rambling walks. The editor, Damion Searls has given readers the gift of reading Thoreau's gems without having to wade through much of the ill-fitting, and redundant paragraphs that inevitably weigh down journal writings. This is a book that speaks to me and will always be with me. I treasure it.

Enjoyable look at the Journals. Thoughtfully edited.

Life would suck without this journal. Thanks, Henry, for all your wonderful and thoughtful work. A year or more of page-flipping ecstasy awaits the reader. I use the journal as a prompt for keeping my own journal. The work operates on many different levels: a forerunner of modern nature writing, a style guide for budding writers, a philosopher's guide to idealism mixed with common sense. I'm half way into my third reading, and bought both paperback and Kindle.

While I agree you can question the editing until you're blue in the face, this is a fine, affordable way to enjoy Thoreau's journals, plus a LOT easier to use than his hardcover versions, which, by the way are difficult to find. My only wish is that it was also available in Kindle version, as it is a book that lends itself very well to "dipping into" almost at random.. I keep it near my reading chair and, even with only a few minutes, am constantly blown away by Mr. HDT's brilliance, wit, and grasp of both the natural and human state of the world.

I have enjoyed this so much. It is tedious at times, but what an insight into the mind of this genius observer of the natural world!

All good

I found this book absolutely fascinating, Thoreau a spiritual genius! I appreciate how he interweaves descriptions of nature with deep philosophical insights.

I love this book. I walk back in time with nature and the timeless and beautiful observations of this amazing man.

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