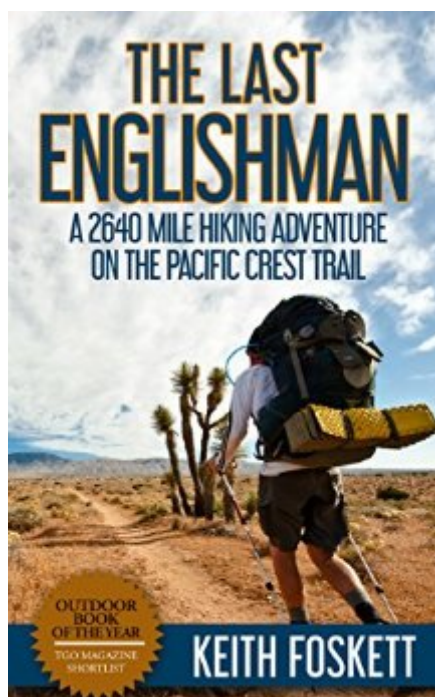


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# The Last Englishman: A Thru-Hiking Adventure On The Pacific Crest Trail



## Synopsis

Shortlisted for Outdoor Book of the Year by The Great Outdoors Magazine. A consistent #1 Best-Seller on Kindle. The Pacific Crest Trail stretches some 2,650 miles from the Mexican border to Canada. It meanders through the scorching deserts of California, the dramatic Sierra Nevada, the volcanic landscape of Oregon and the vast forests of Washington. Every year around 300 hikers attempt to walk its entirety. Four in ten give up in the first month alone and only two in ten will reach Canada. Extremes of heat and cold, the toughness and roughness of the trail and encounters with an assortment of potentially deadly creatures stretch walkers to their absolute limits. It's a lesson Keith Foskett soon learns the hard way, having to deal with blisters and other physical ailments, as well as his inherent phobia of snakes, spiders, bears, getting dirty and camping in the woods after dark. With the harsh winter looming, he enters into a desperate race against time, facing a dangerous, physical and very real threat to become the last Englishman to complete the greatest long distance walking trail on Earth. I'm not sure if Keith Foskett knows it but he has penned a hiking classic. I just wanted to pack up my bags and head off into the wilderness.' " Spencer Vignes (The Observer). 'Telling the true story of a seven-month PCT hike from Mexico to Canada, crossing wild desert and mountain and meeting everything from eccentric hikers to rattlesnakes along the way. Easy to read and at times laugh-out-loud funny, it will make you want to pack your rucksack and go.' " Rosie Fuller (Adventure Travel magazine). 'Long-distance hiking is tragically romantic: it's not all about fresh air, aesthetic majesty, and colorful company. This book is refreshingly honest about the difficulties and day-to-day monotony. But it also captures the rewards of this oversized effort to hike the United States end to end.' " Andrew Skurka (National Geographic Adventurer of the Year).

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I felt that this book kind of missed its mark. Its not a bad book, its quite readable, its just not a great book. I have to say its hard to be critical of anyone that had the motivation to get up and walk the PCT, and also, well done for getting out there and writing about it. I certainly feel that the author had good intentions with the book, its just that it kind of didn't really convey the feeling of walking the PCT for me. There seemed to be a lot of detail about the towns they arrived at, and the large amounts of food they ate, the other trails users that were in the towns etc, but in between, very little about the actual walking of the trail. I realise that the towns, and the people are part of the whole experience, but it kind of took up far too much of the book. There was so little description of the actual trail, the experiences and feelings of being there. The writing just didn't get up there with a good travel writer and you kind of felt like someone was just sitting and saying "we did this, and then this happened" and never really pulled you into the whole experience. I thought that the last section of walking in the early Washington winter was where the author started to get the idea of a travel book, but by then it was a little too late.

I am an avid backpacker, and I live not far from the PCT in Washington. Because I can't take time off from making a living to be a thru-hiker, I have been section hiking the Washington PCT for the past few years. When I can't be on the trail, I am an avid reader of "armchair adventures," especially books about the PCT. Over the years I've noticed a pattern in most PCT adventure books: the first 7/8 of the book describes travels through California, the next few chapters describe hiking through Oregon, and then there are a few token pages that basically say "and then it rained in Washington and then I reached Canada. The End" Keith Foskett's book gave more than a glancing blow to the beauty of the Washington PCT, which I greatly appreciated. I also appreciated the fact that he hiked his own hike, and even though he took an alternative route through parts of Oregon due to winter weather conditions, he felt--and I agree with him wholeheartedly--that he hiked the entire PCT. His trail companions came alive on the pages of this book, and his account was both humorous and

introspective--without becoming a pity party. I thoroughly enjoyed it from start to finish.

I bought this book late last year along with some other PCT books as I hope to hike at least part of it in 2014. I just finished this and my fascination with the PCT has only increased. Keith's writing is so descriptive of his daily travels that I could visualize the environment he was in, I could almost smell the food he cooked, feel the snow hip deep and his hiking buddies are people I want to know, real people facing their daily lives head on. I would recommend this to anyone that enjoys hiking. It is a wonderful read. *The Last Englishman (Volume 1)*

For those of us who "for the time being" can't escape the daily grind for half a year or so to explore the delights of the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT), Keith "Fozzie" Foskett's account of his own thru-hiking journey along that route is informative and compelling, providing its fair share of candor, beauty, and armchair thrills. Fozzie is immediately engaging as an author, just as he is as a videographer "if you haven't found his YouTube videos of this same journey, I encourage you do to seek them out. I watched the entire video series first, a treat that enabled me to match faces with names and to have a very clear sense of the good humor that appears to prevail among thru-hikers on the PCT, and to see what sort of terrain Fozzie was traversing. But where this book shines is something beyond the scope of on-the-trail field reports, and that is the way in which Fozzie allows access to his feelings along the way. Fozzie is disarmingly candid about everything from his various fears to his moments of personal pride to his secrets of campfire condiment collection. By the end of the book one has come to an understanding of a thru-hiker's perspective, and this is no mean accomplishment in an era when Internet connections and the latest gadget dominate our daily lives: there is much value in conveying insight into the mindset of those who abandon those trappings of civilization in favor of a remote existence in the wilderness. Echoes of Thoreau . . . . But what one is left with after reading this book is also the unmistakable gnawing sensation of wanderlust: the bittersweet return to civilization that Fozzie experienced after his hike is one we, too, as readers experience, for like any worthwhile journey, the reading of this record of Fozzie's thru-hike is engrossing and compelling, one we are loathe to relegate to the past when we must return to the present. I thoroughly enjoyed this book, and I suspect any would who has contemplated a thru-hike or who has sought solace in nature.

This is the fourth memoir of a Pacific Crest Trail thru-hike I've read, the others being *Wild*, *Hiker Trash* and *Dances with Marmots*. While the other three are great and I would recommend them all,

this one... This one is a cut above. The storytelling is engrossing. The imagery is captivating. The personalities and idiosyncrasies of Fozzie's hiking companions is deeply captured. You feel the experience--the trail, the wilderness, the weather, the people, the hardships, and, above all, the joy. Well done.

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