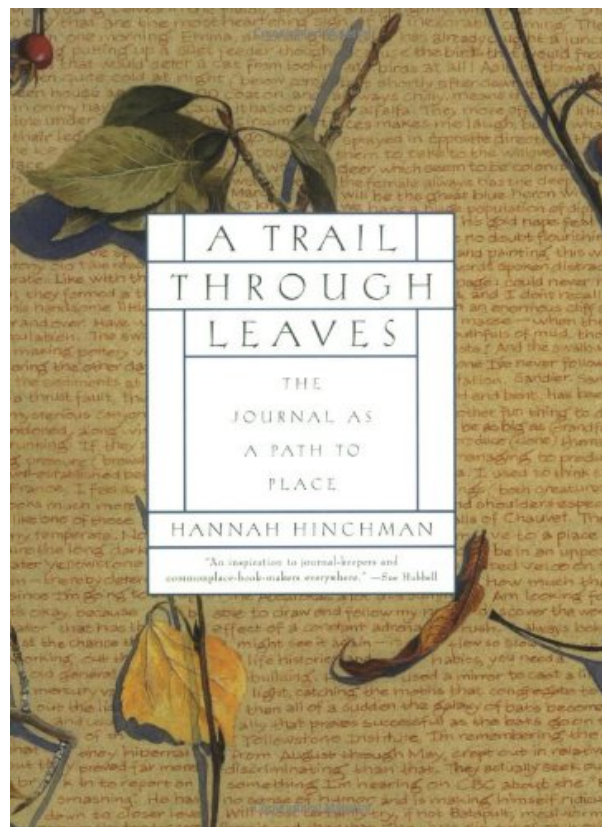
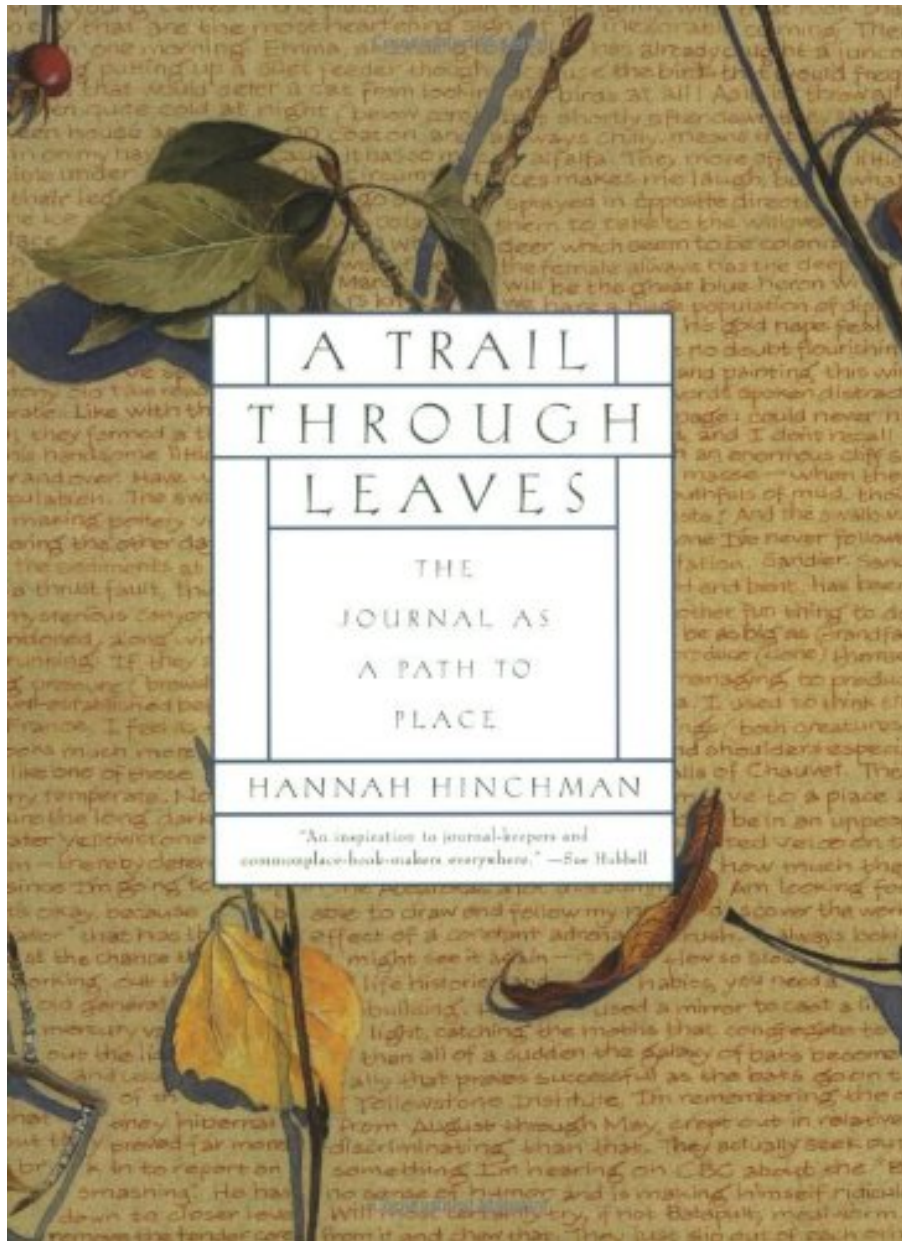


A TRAIL THROUGH LEAVES: THE JOURNAL AS A PATH TO PLACE BY HANNAH HINCHMAN



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"Wow! What a find this is! . . . We all have something to learn from such an exquisite resource." Tattered Cover Bookstore, Denver, Colorado

To artist-writer-naturalist Hannah Hinchman, the blank pages of a journal are a call to awaken the soul, to celebrate being alive in the world, to get to know both the wilderness of our inmost selves and the "unpredictable and potent" natural world. In the richly illustrated pages of this book, she unfolds a myriad of wonders ? the pattern of a bee abdomen, varieties of ice forms and sky colors, the joys of a garden ? and shows us how to capture them on the page. Hinchman's respect for the miracle of our five senses, and her passion for what they can tell us about the world, is contagious. "Start with a smell, like a crushed marigold leaf, the sea, coal smoke," she advises, and from such raw materials begin to "decant the stuff of life" into journal form, "where it remains fresh, still tasting of its source." Even for one who has no intention of journal-keeping, to delve into Hinchman's own work is to see with new eyes. A Trail Through Leaves is a true gift and inspiration, a treasure-box of ways to write, draw, and be alive to the world. * "This is an important book, brilliantly produced. Its light will linger a long, long time." ? John R. Stilgoe, professor in the history of landscape, Harvard University * "[B]oth a rich work of performance art and a personal growth tool with many handles." ? Boston Globe Full-color and black-and-white drawings throughout

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most encompassing inside.

Most helpful customer reviews

19 of 19 people found the following review helpful.

A beautiful book--inspirational and instructional

By A Customer

For those of us attempting to cut through the clutter of busy urban life, this book is a beautiful reminder of how to use close, patient observation of what's around us to enhance our enjoyment of life. Hannah Hinchman even includes practical tips for equipping yourself with the tools of a field artist. After reading two chapters, I bought three pencils and a sketch pad and went to a local park to find something to draw. I hadn't seriously drawn anything in twenty some years, but her book reminded me of how important excursions into the woods had been when to me when I was young. *A Trail Through Leaves* made my eyes hungry to observe quirky insects and plants, and my hand itchy to draw again. The hardcover book is beautifully printed and laid out and feels good in your hands. It's not a "can't put it down" read--it's a book to dip into and go back to. For animal lovers, it should be noted that Hannah Hinchman's love for horses and cats is contagious; her respect for them and sense of wonder about her connection to them are communicated through her sketches and her writing.

63 of 74 people found the following review helpful.

Somewhat dissapointing

By Kelly

Having kept journals since I was a kid, I thought this book might help to renew my passion for the activity and inspire me to see new things. The premise of the book seemed perfect: the journal as a path to place. But be forewarned: this book is not a manual for how to explore the world around you or examine your life through journaling. It is a wordy autobiography of one woman and the techniques that work for her. The first chapter is nothing but an exhaustive summary of her own life and the journals she kept; the second rambles on and on about the differences in ball-point pens and small art brushes, all described through the experiences of the author: "I like the Bic much better than the heavy, pretentious Mont Blanc ballpoint pen that my friend found in the street. It's unbalanced, and the tip is stingy and stiff. But the Mont Blac fountain pen - there is a truely loveable tool."

Reading this book, I can't help but feel that it is a forged account of being true to oneself. Each illustration, supposedly taken from the author's journals, is picture-perfect and ready to be hung on the wall. Any written text that accompanies it is painstakingly neat and labored. There isn't a visual hint of imperfection anywhere, and it makes the book seem commercial and not very real.

This book does have several good points: it has some very good lessons on art technique and it does hold some very thought-provolking observations amidst the flowery language and self-absorbed babbling. But if you're like me and looking for a book to help you dive below the surface of perfectionistic drawings and whimsical, unobtrusive text, look elsewhere.

12 of 12 people found the following review helpful.

Beautiful introduction to visual diary-keeping

By economist

In my 15 years of keeping a diary, I spent the first 10 keeping a conventional written record of thoughts, ideas, and occurances. But about 5 years ago my diary keeping received a pleasant and unexpected jolt when I encountered Hannah Hinchman's '*A Trail Through Leaves: The Journal as a Path to Place*'. This beautifully written and illustrated book on keeping a visual diary completely enlarged my ideas of what a diary could be: a visual record as well as a meditation on the material universe.

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