

How I Conquered the Roads: My Biking Big Year in the Era of COVID-19

In the midst of the pandemic-induced chaos that engulfed the world, I found solace in the simple yet exhilarating act of biking. As the lockdowns confined us to our homes, I decided to embrace the challenge of a biking big year, exploring deserted roads, immersing myself in nature, and revelling in the freedom that two wheels can offer. Little did I know that this biking adventure would transform my year into an unforgettable journey of self-discovery and resilience in the face of adversity.

Discovering the Joy of Cycling

Prior to 2020, biking was a recreational activity that occasionally graced my weekends. However, as the pandemic arrived and the world came to a standstill, I felt compelled to find an outlet for my restless spirit. That's when I stumbled upon the beautiful art of cycling.

Equipped with a sturdy bike and determination coursing through my veins, I set out to conquer the open roads. Exploring new routes, picturesque landscapes, and hidden gems became my daily ritual. With each pedal stroke, I felt a newfound sense of freedom and liberation from the worries that plagued the world outside. The captivating beauty of nature, accompanied by the whistling of the wind in my ears, became my shelter from the pandemic-induced storm.

Extreme Birding: My Biking Big Year in the Era of COVID-19 by S. M. Amadae(Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 174405 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled



Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting: Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 294 pages
Lending : Enabled



A Journey Amidst the Pandemic

While the world grappled with the adversities posed by COVID-19, my biking big year became a testament to resilience and determination. The deserted streets allowed me to delve deep into my surroundings, discovering hidden pockets of tranquility that often go unnoticed in our fast-paced lives. From quaint countryside trails to breathtaking mountain vistas, every turn of the pedal revealed a new slice of beauty that brought a sense of wonder to my soul.

One of the highlights of my biking big year was the opportunity to rediscover my local community. As travel restrictions limited my options, I started to explore the nooks and crannies of my own neighborhood. With each passing day, I stumbled upon local cafes, vibrant street art, and hidden parks that had previously gone unnoticed in the hustle and bustle of daily life.

Connecting with a Community

As I ventured further in my biking escapade, I stumbled upon a thriving online community of fellow bikers also seeking solace, adventure, and connection during these unprecedented times. Through virtual platforms and local cycling groups, I

found myself surrounded by like-minded individuals who shared a deep passion for exploring the world on two wheels.

This newfound community became a source of inspiration, as we shared our experiences, recommended routes, and cheered each other on through virtual challenges. The camaraderie and support exhibited by this community proved that even during isolation, we were not alone. Together, we rode through the rollercoaster of emotions that the pandemic brought upon us, finding strength in the unity created by our shared love for biking.

A Journey of Self-Discovery

Beyond the physical gains and exploration, my biking big year became a transformative journey of self-discovery. As I pushed my limits, conquering steep climbs and navigating unfamiliar terrains, I learned to embrace challenges and overcome obstacles that stood in my way. The resilience built through this journey of perseverance started bleeding into other aspects of my life as well, leading to personal growth and a newfound sense of confidence.

Moreover, the serenity found amidst the chaos of the pandemic offered me an opportunity to reflect and reconnect with myself on a deeper level. As the wheels turned, my mind wandered, allowing me to gain clarity, find inspiration, and reignite passions that had been overshadowed by the weight of the world. The bike became more than a means of transportation; it became a vessel for self-exploration and a conduit for creativity.

A Vision of Hope

As my biking big year draws to a close, I reflect upon the extraordinary journey it has been. In the face of unprecedented challenges, I found solace, adventure, and connection through the simple act of biking. This personal transformation

reaffirms the indomitable spirit of humanity, reminding us that even in the darkest of times, there is always a glimmer of light waiting to be discovered.

So, as we navigate the uncertainties of the world in the era of COVID-19, I urge you to find your own biking big year – a journey that will not only heal your soul and invigorate your spirit but will also redefine your perspective on life. Embrace the freedom and joy that cycling offers, explore the beauty hidden in your surroundings, and join a thriving community of passionate bikers who will support you through thick and thin. Together, let's pedal towards a brighter future, one revolution at a time.



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Extreme Birding takes one on the myriad adventures of an avid birder and his quest to find as many bird species as possible whilst being self-supported and powered only by his legs.

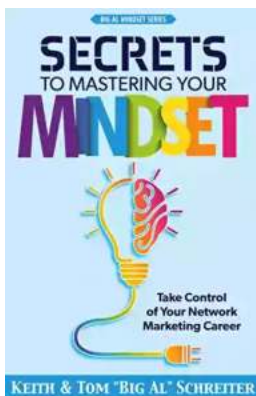
Living in northeastern Illinois where cold weather is king five to six months a year, Beau Schaefer rode his gravel bikes over 6000 miles and identified 276 species of birds on these rides through the six-county greater Chicago area. All of this in

the midst of a pandemic. A CrossFit coach and retired high school biology teacher, Schaefer took up cycling in 2018 to combat severe sciatica. The bike quickly became his main transport for bird-finding missions.

In addition, Beau's odyssey was one of social connection and group effort, as numerous people and groups played a significant part in the planning, support, and bird finding.

“Beau presents a detailed and interesting account of his effort to conduct a Green Big Year in Lake County, Illinois, a largely suburban area north of Chicago. Chasing birds is in the blood of many birders, and Beau presents an environmentally sound way to do that. It may not be for everyone, but Beau’s tale is certainly an inspiration for the rest of us.” — Joel Greenberg, author of *A Feathered River Across the Sky* and *The Natural History of the Chicago Region*

"Beau’s Green Big Year achievement is the envy of every Chicago birder – an incredible 276 birds seen on a year-long, fossil-free, 6,119-mile walking and biking odyssey while frequently dealing with the vagaries of Chicago weather, including snow. It’s a feat of physical endurance, birding skill, strategic planning and sheer grit. Whether you’re a casual birder or an everyday-in-the-field fanatic, this book is a wild ride (literally!) and one you won’t forget." — Rena Cohen, President, Lake/Cook Chapter, Illinois Audubon Society



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