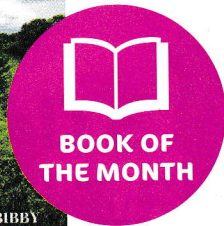
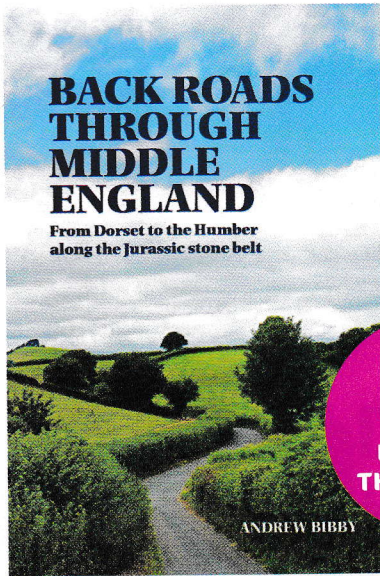


Book reviews

BOOKS

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST CYCLING-RELATED READS



Andrew Bibby

BACK ROADS THROUGH MIDDLE ENGLAND £13.95

gritstone.coop

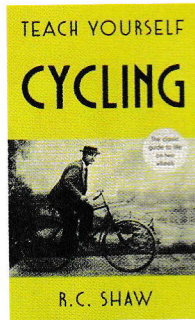
IF YOU ASKED your friends what route they'd recommend for an eight-day ride in the UK, pedalling the 430 miles from the Dorset coast to the Humber would probably not feature in their suggestions. That's one of the fascinating aspects of Andrew Bibby's journey to try to discover 'middle England'.

Following the line of the great belt of 'Cotswold' limestone through ten different counties, Bibby's challenge was not the distance travelled, but rather what he could learn along the way about the factors that shape the land.

Sometimes cycle travelogues can seem formulaic: the author went from here to there and this is what happened on the way. In contrast, this book is an exploration of landscape, nature, rural life, social history, identity, and change. The bicycle is merely the conduit that permits Bibby to slowly take in and enjoy the countryside and its characters.

Full of detail and well researched, it was, however, Bibby's hedgehog observation that struck a chord with me. He sees roadkill strewn over the back roads but not a single squashed hedgehog, leading to his conclusion that what we are told is true: hedgehogs are indeed a species in rapid decline.

Duncan Dollimore

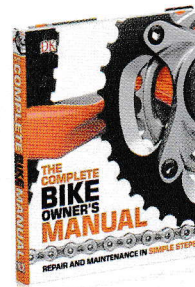


RC Shaw
TEACH YOURSELF CYCLING £7.99

hodder.co.uk

IS IT POSSIBLE to teach yourself cycling? As a National Standard Instructor, I would say it's better to learn from a person or a video than a book. This book is billed as 'the classic guide to life on two wheels' and was originally published in 1953. The language used reflects the times with references to the trainee cyclist only ever being male, whilst the only female mentioned is a seamstress! The best thing about it is its collection of wonderful Frank Patterson drawings.

Julie Rand

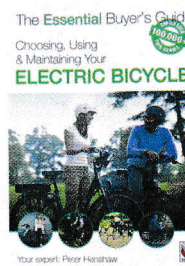


Claire Beaumont, Ben Spurrier, et al
THE COMPLETE BIKE OWNER'S MANUAL £14.95

dk.com

AFTER GOING ON a Cycling UK bike maintenance course, I've been trying to learn more about how my bikes work. Tinkering on reveals so much, which is why I've found this book really helpful. The CGI cross-sections of mechanical parts (the insides too small to be shown in photos) are clear, and the text isn't patronising or confusing. A great book for both beginner and competent home mechanics.

Victoria Hazael



Peter Henshaw
CHOOSING, USING & MAINTAINING YOUR ELECTRIC BICYCLE £9.95

veloce.co.uk

WHAT I LIKE about this book is that it's written in plain English. It provides enough technical information for the average buyer but avoids jargon. All aspects of buying, using, and maintaining e-bikes are covered, including the law, types of bikes, retro-fit motors, and buying secondhand. Having worked in an electric bike shop, I can say that knowledgeable staff will give you this information to hand, but good e-bikes are cheap so it's worth doing your homework first.

Roland Seber



READ MORE ONLINE

For more reviews of bikes, kit and components, as well as how-to guides, visit cyclinguk.org/cycling-advice