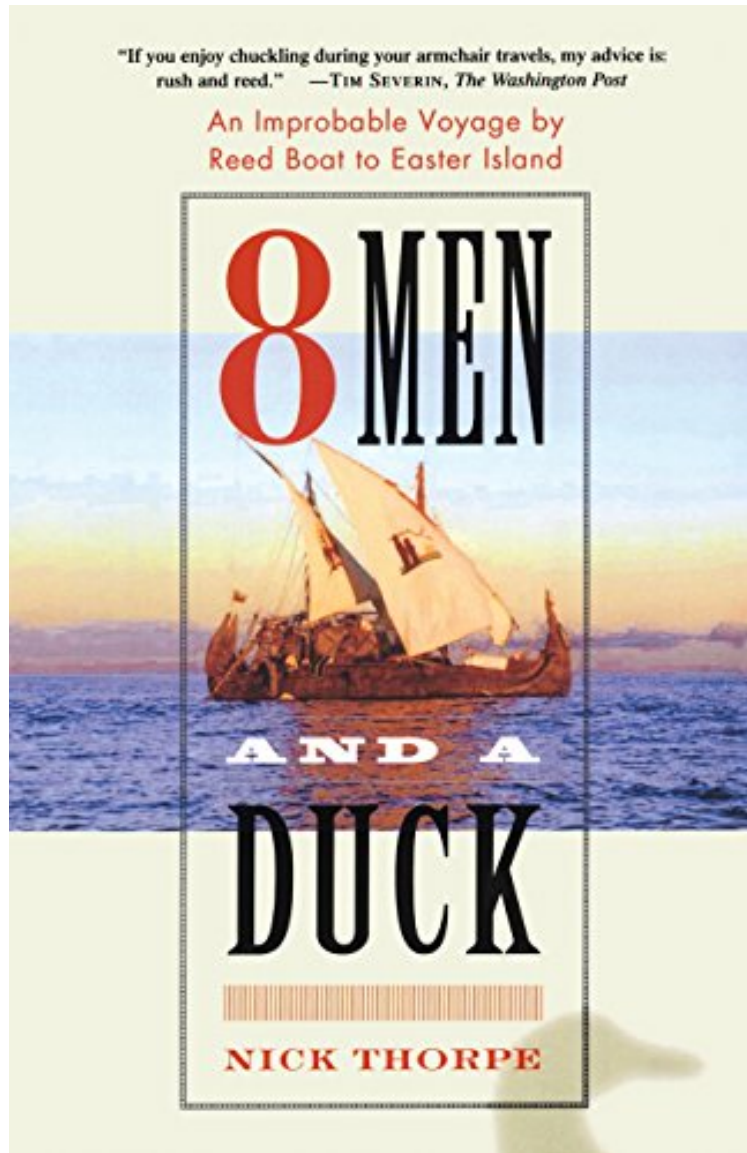


8 Men and a Duck: An Improbable Voyage by Reed Boat to Easter Island

Nick Thorpe

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Nick Thorpe : 8 Men and a Duck: An Improbable Voyage by Reed Boat to Easter Island before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised 8 Men and a Duck: An Improbable Voyage by Reed Boat to Easter Island:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Great Adventure By Inexperienced CharactersBy Scott

Kurttila While the start of the book is a dash slow being focused on the building of the actual craft and pulling a crew together, it soon picks up and races across the Pacific. The author has an incredible sense for wording which oft makes this non-fiction read like pure poetry. If only we all could be so eloquent, English would then remain a beautiful language. The book is pleasantly lacking an overload of technical know-how and expertise as so many adventure books can be. Rather than bog the reader down with intricate details, the author keeps the story alive and fresh with emotions ranging from the struggle against the elements while being entirely out of his own element to the intricacies of life aboard a small vessel for two months with complete strangers who don't always mix well but eventually bond enough as a cohesive family and team to survive. It becomes entertaining after the first two chapters but is inspiring throughout. This book offers evidence to what can be done when one has a dream no matter how silly the dream or how high the obstacles loom. A great account of a fantastic adventure that not many would dare to take or be able to pull off. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I wanna go By Time Flies If you're 40 something, know nothing about sailing, and can't get the idea out of your head of giving it all up to build or buy a boat and set sail to anywhere, than reading this book probably won't help; but it may save your life. This is a fantastic book of adventure, a true story about a boat that shouldn't float and it's crew. It's well written, humorous, easy to read, and very entertaining. For reed boat construction fans it's a must read. Author Nick Thorpe does a great job covering all aspects of the voyage (from construction on) as he goes, "along for the ride". You'll read it more than once. Note: This is not a book about how to build a reed boat, but rather the voyage about one. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A good book; well written. By Yet Another This book is an interesting story of men confronting and overcoming difficulties. Each faced with inner conflicts and all facing real danger. Having read hundreds of travel adventure books, the prose of this book stands high above others. Nick Thorpe is a talented wordsmith that has taken an adventure and made it a pleasure to read not only for the subject matter but the style of writing. The book is absent of flowery language others use attempting to achieve what Thorpe has done so naturally. I've rated this book high in my collection.

Even with the wind on our side and all eight of us pulling, we had never yet managed to change the complex sails.... Now we had to pull against the full force of the wind, in a storm, in the middle of the night.... So begins Nick Thorpe's unlikely journey to sail 2,500 miles from northern Chile to Easter Island on the Viracocha -- a boat made of reeds. Captain Phil Buck's desire to test the waters in this pre-Incan boat was twofold: to reopen the controversial migration theories of Thor Heyerdahl, who sailed his boat the Kon-Tiki from Peru to Polynesia in 1947, and to have one heck of a time in the process. With a crew that includes a tree surgeon, a jewelry salesman, and two ducks, Thorpe embarks on an unnerving Pacific voyage that is by turns fierce and farce: from the bungled phone call that triggered a naval rescue alert to the constant race against the inexorable sinking of the soggy hull. A story of high tides and even higher stakes, *8 Men and a Duck* is a tale of friendship, fate, and the unlikely distances people will travel for true adventure.

From Publishers Weekly When British travel writer and all-around thrill seeker Thorpe was traveling the wilds of Bolivia by bus, he passed the time by eavesdropping on a Frenchman talking to an Australian about a boat made of reeds. The conversation seemed more interesting than your average cross-cultural traveler exchange, so Thorpe listened intently as the Frenchman talked about legendary voyager Thor Heyerdahl and about continuing his legacy, about building this reed boat in Huatajata and sailing to Easter Island in it just eight men and a duck. Thorpe's enthusiasm for this insanity was such that he had to get involved. And not just as a documentarian: an original crew member dropped out, Thorpe dropped in and soon the journalist found himself making sails. The resulting narrative is witty, sad and as brave and daft as those who sail. Thorpe's British self-deprecation and eye for detail legitimize his passing comments on his fellow crew members, providing comic relief in an often claustrophobic text. A master of tension, Thorpe mingles storms, bruised egos, paranoia, food shortages, botched launchings, lamented loved ones and utterly inept seamanship into a tale of triumph against the odds. In Thorpe's hands, a travelogue becomes a comedy of errors, a farce, a Latin epic and a picaresque tale. It's a warm, wonderful book, a story of enthusiasm superseding expertise in which Fate smiles favorably. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal Scottish award-winning journalist and travel writer Thorpe happened upon this "improbable" adventure while riding a bus in Bolivia. He overheard a conversation about an ambitious voyage across the Pacific and instantly decided to join in. Phil Buck, the American who conceived and led the voyage, believed that Thor Heyerdahl's controversial migration theories could be proven with the Viracocha, a modern copy of a pre-Incan boat made of totora reeds. He recruited a local crew and employed local reed boat builders to make the craft. The only problem was that since reeds absorb water, the boat would start sinking as soon as it was launched. In this entertaining story of the 44-day journey, Thorpe recounts the many difficulties crew members encountered, such as storms and ship and shark sightings. Although the eight-man crew ultimately prevailed, when they reached Easter Island they learned that their sinking ship could not be saved and had to be burned. This well-written story is sure to be popular in public libraries. John Kenny, San Francisco P.L. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. From Booklist Thorpe's chance

encounter with a sailor on a bus in Bolivia led him to join an eight-man, two-duck crew of a reed boat on a voyage across the Pacific. They were attempting to replicate Thor Heyerdahl's sea voyage on the Kon-Tiki. Thorpe soon discovered that the crew's maritime experience was rudimentary. Ship captain Phil Buck was primarily a mountaineer, and so Thorpe was enlisted as a sail maker. Their amateur level of competence would have been alarming if not for the comedic potential of the madcap expedition. You get to know your neighbors well in tight quarters, and Thorpe's sardonic profiles and self-deprecation round out this appealing adventure tale. Gilbert Taylor Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved