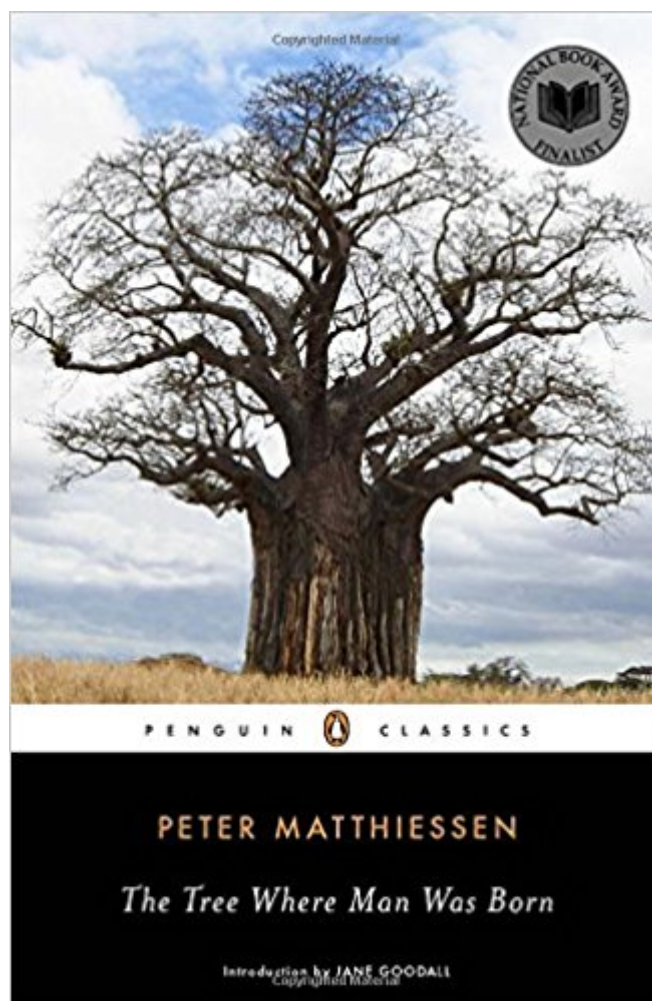


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# The Tree Where Man Was Born (Penguin Classics)



## Synopsis

A timeless and majestic portrait of Africa by renowned writer Peter Matthiessen (1927-2014), author of the National Book Award-winning *The Snow Leopard* and the new novel *In Paradise*. A finalist for the National Book Award when it was released in 1972, this vivid portrait of East Africa remains as fresh and revelatory now as on the day it was first published. Peter Matthiessen exquisitely combines nature and travel writing to portray the sights, scenes, and people he observed firsthand in several trips over the course of a dozen years. From the daily lives of wild herdsman and the drama of predator kills to the field biologists investigating wild creatures and the anthropologists seeking humanity's origins in the rift valley, *The Tree Where Man Was Born* is a classic of journalistic observation. This Penguin Classics edition features an introduction by groundbreaking British primatologist Jane Goodall. For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Peter Matthiessen was the cofounder of *The Paris Review* and is the author of numerous works of nonfiction, including *In the Spirit of Crazy Horse*, *Indian Country*,

and *À The Snow Leopard*, winner of the National Book Award.

Typically beautiful description of the East African area. Would have liked more detail of the tribes living in the area. Peter Matthiessen is well known for painting glorious word pictures of all the locals he has been to. I have read most of the books he has written and am always enchanted by his love for and understanding of the lands he travel in.

Matthiessen, as always, puts lyrics to the page. He writes with huge acceptance, yet shows always a moral center. That moral center sometimes informs rage at something, but that rage is eloquent, and softly expressed. This is now a rather old book, but the pages carry the story of wild Africa right into the modern age. It's probably a past Africa, now. If so, the book and its story are a winsome lament.

have not finished, find I must read it carefully to catch all the details. EXCELLENT!

Spectacularly written. My first Matthiessen, discovered after reading an obituary earlier this year, I have been enthralled by it. More travelogue than I expected but beautifully handled and with a deep appreciation for the people and clear love of the land and animals of East Africa. Wonderfully well researched and a romantic throw back.

The Tree Where Man Was Born (Classic, Nature, Penguin) The Tree Where Man Was Born by Peter Matthiessen  
My rating: 5 of 5 stars  
I bought this book before I knew who Peter Matthiessen was, namely, one of the greatest nature writers of all time. Because of the book's title, I thought the author would tie present day East Africa to a by-gone era when man was primitive and evolving and nature ruled. I read the first one-hundred fifty pages and put it down for five years before returning to it. At that time, I was lost in my passion for the life and times of early man and not so interested in anything that rhymed with 'present day'. Then, after finishing that portion of my writing, I returned to what might be Matthiessen's greatest nature book (well, there is *Snow Leopard* and *At Play in the Fields of the Lord*. Hard to pick). When I picked it up the second time, I couldn't put it down. His descriptions of nature, the depth of understanding he voices for the people of the land, his vivid descriptions of what happens around him are like no one else. Here are a few of my favorites:  
\* Soon vegetation crowded the road, which was crossed at dusk by a band of bush-pig, neat-footed and burly, neck bristles erect, as if intent on punching holes right through the truck\*  
\* Soft hills inset

with outcrops of elephant-colored boulders rose beyond a bright stretch of blue river\* Kamande Gatora is a contained person with the watchfulness of the near-blind; he had taken the Mau-Mau oath and been imprisoned, in the years after his mistress had gone home to Denmark, despite 'the kind deeds I was receiving from her untold and the old life we stayed with her\* Marsabit in June: great elephants and volcanoes, lark song and bright butterflies and far below, pale desert wastes that vanish in the sands.\* By morning the wind was blowing up in sandstorms. Flights of sand grouse, seeking water, hurtled back and forth over the cracking palms, and a train of camels etched a slow crack into the desert to the south.\* Inland, black boulders climb to far-off ridges that rise in turn to the Kulal Mountains, in Rendille Land.\* ...because the heat is dry and because the wind is never still for more than a few hours.\* Since gnu are ever willing to stampede, the crossing is a hazard for the calves, and one morning of early winter more than six hundred drowned.\* By late afternoon, when the predators become restless, raising their heads out of the grass to sniff the wind, those calves would already be running. I'm only to pg. 127... Does it take your breath away, too?

Excellent. Arrived quickly

Well packed. Very satisfied with it.

I recently visited Tanzania. The cover photo of the baobab tree brings me back to the Serengeti. The book covers much of the same area we visited. Very appropriate commentary, including historical perspective. By the way, my friend kept telling me about the pictures in her book of the same title. I couldn't understand it until she brought it over -- same text with magnificent photos: a coffee table book. Available as a used book from : same title with photos by Eliot Porter, titled "The African Experience." Of course, I bought it.

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