**May 12, 1990:** Christopher Johnson McCandless graduates from Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia. He tells his parents that he is going to spend the summer traveling in his car, a used yellow Datsun.

**June 1990:** Mails his final college transcript and a brief note to his parents' home in the suburbs of Washington, D.C. McCandless's family will never hear from him again.

**July 6, 1990:** Arrives at Lake Mead National Recreation Area in Nevada.

**July 10, 1990:** Abandons his car after it is damaged by a flash flood. Loads his belongings into his backpack and sets out on foot.

**July–August 1990:** Hitchhikes to California's Lake Tahoe, then hikes into the Sierra Nevada mountain range. Travels to the Cascade mountains, across the lava beds of the Columbia River basin, and across the Idaho panhandle. Jan Burres and her boyfriend Bob discover McCandless by the side of the road and befriend him. In Cut Bank, Montana, meets Wayne Westerberg.

**August 1990:** McCandless's parents drive to Atlanta looking for their son and discover that his apartment was vacated five weeks earlier.

**August 10, 1990:** Receives a ticket for hitchhiking in Willow Creek, California.

**October 1990:** McCandless's Datsun is discovered by a park ranger.

**October 28, 1990:** In Needles, California, reaches the Colorado River. Walks south through the desert, arriving in Topock, Arizona, where he buys a second-hand canoe.

**October–November 1990:** Canoes on the Colorado River, apparently traveling through Lake Havasu, the Bill Williams River, the Colorado River Indian Reservation, the Cibola National Wildlife Refuge, the Imperial National Wildlife Refuge, and the U.S. Army's Yuma Proving Ground. Sends a postcard to Wayne Westerberg at the Sioux Falls work-release facility where his friend has been incarcerated.

**December 1990:** The private investigator employed by McCandless's parents discovers that their son donated $24,000 to OXFAM.

**December 2, 1990:** Reaches the Morelos Dam and the Mexican border.

**December 6, 1990:** Encounters hazardous waterfalls along the Colorado River.

**December 12, 1990:** Realizes that he will not reach the Gulf of California traveling this route. Meets duck hunters who drive him there.

**December 14–24, 1990:** Pulls his canoe out of the water and sets up camp on the edge of a desolate plateau.

**December 25, 1990:** Seeking refuge from high winds, discovers a cave on the face of a bluff, where he stays for 10 days.

**January 11, 1991:** Back in his canoe, encounters a violent storm that almost drowns him.

**January 16, 1991:** Leaving his canoe at El Golfo de Santa Clara, starts wandering northward.

**January 18, 1991:** Caught by U.S. Immigration officials when he tries to slip back into the country from Mexico. Spends one night in jail.

**January–February 1991:** Travels to Houston and then to the Pacific coast.

**February 3, 1991:** Applies for an ID and a job in Los Angeles, then changes his mind and returns to the road.

**February 9, 1991:** Camps at the bottom of the Grand Canyon with a young German couple. Notes in his journal that he has lost over 25 pounds.

**February 24, 1991:** Unearths the few belongings that he buried in the sand when he abandoned his Datsun.

**February 27, 1991:** Buries his backpack and hitchhikes into Las Vegas.

**May 10, 1991:** Leaves Las Vegas.

**July–August, 1991:** Possibly living in coastal Oregon, sends a postcard to Jan Burres complaining about the interminable fog and rain.

**October 1991:** Arrives in Bullhead City, Arizona, where he works for two months at McDonald's and lives in an empty RV overseen by an old man named Charlie.

**December 9, 1991:** Sends a postcard to Jan Burres in Niland, California, including a map so she and boyfriend Bob can visit him in Bullhead City.

**December 13, 1991:** Unexpectedly appears at Burres's campsite at The Slabs campground in Niland.

**January 1992:** Meets Ronald Franz while hitchhiking near California's Salton Sea.

**February 1992:** Dropped by Franz at the San Diego waterfront. Mails Jan Burres a postcard telling her that he has been living on the streets in San Diego for a week.

**March 5, 1992:** Sends postcards to Burres and Franz from Seattle.

**March 12, 1992:** Calls Franz from Coachella, California, in the desert not far from the Salton Sea and asks Franz to pick him up.

**March 13, 1992:** Spends one night at Franz's house.

**March 14, 1992:** Driven by Franz to Grand Junction, Colorado.

**March 14 (approximate) to March 28, 1992:** Works at Wayne Westerberg's grain elevator in Carthage, South Dakota.

**March 1992:** Leaves Carthage, bound for Alaska.

**April 13–15, 1992:** Stops at Liard Hot Springs in British Columbia, Canada, where he is stuck for two days before hitching a ride with Gaylord Stuckey in the cab of his sunflower-seed-hauling truck.

**April 18, 1992:** Hitchhikes north. Takes a photo of the sign that marks the official start of the Alaska Highway.

**April 18–21, 1992:** Reads up on edible plants at the University of Alaska's Fairbanks campus. Buys a used gun and sends postcards. Leaving the campus, hikes west.

**April 22, 1992 (approximate):** Pitches his tent on frozen ground not far from the Stampede Trail.

**April 28, 1992:** Waking down the highway, is picked up by Jim Gallien, a truck-driving electrician on his way to Anchorage. A three-hour drive brings McCandless to the Stampede Trail.

**April 30, 1992:** Sees Mt. McKinley.

**May 1, 1992:** Finds an old bus beside the Sushana River and writes "Magic Bus Day" in his journal. Decides to stay for a while, taking advantage of the bus's ". . . crude comforts."

**May 5, 1992:** Kills and eats a spruce grouse.

**May 9, 1992:** Shoots a small squirrel and writes "4th day famine" in his journal.

**Mid-May, 1992:** With only four hours of darkness each night, can forage for edible plants. Feasts on lingonberries and rose hips.

**May 22, 1992:** A crown falls off one of McCandless's molars.

**May–June 1992:** Regularly eats squirrel, spruce grouse, duck, goose, and porcupine.

**June 9, 1992:** Kills a moose and takes a photo of himself with the carcass.

**June 10, 1992:** Amid hordes of flies and mosquitoes, butchers the moose carcass and tries to preserve the meat.

**June 14, 1992:** Discovering maggots on the carcass, abandons it to the local wolves.

**July 3, 1992:** Prepares his backpack and sets out on the 20-mile hike back to the road.

**July 5, 1992:** What had been a series of frozen beaver ponds in April has become a lake. What once was an easily fordable river is now a raging torrent that McCandless cannot cross. Heads back to the bus.

**July 8, 1992:** Arrives back at the bus.

**July 30, 1992:** Writes in his journal, "EXTREMELY WEAK, FAULT OF POT. SEED. MUCH TROUBLE JUST TO STAND UP. STARVING. GREAT JEOPARDY."

**August 5, 1992:** Writes "DAY 100! MADE IT!" and "BUT IN WEAKEST CONDITION OF LIFE. DEATH LOOMS AS SERIOUS THREAT."

**August 9, 1992:** Sees a bear but doesn't shoot it, kills five squirrels.

**August 11, 1992:** Kills and eats a ptarmigan.

**August 12, 1992:** Posting an S.O.S. note on the bus door, forages nearby for berries. Writes his final journal entry: "Beautiful blueberries."

**August 18 or 19, 1992:** Dies, apparently of starvation, in his sleeping bag in the bus along the Sushana River in Alaska.

**September 1992:** Hikers and hunters discover McCandless's S.O.S. note, then his body in the bus.