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To cite this article: Joshua Nash (2013) Landscape Underwater, Underwater Landscapes: Kangaroo Island Diving Site Names as Elements of the Linguistic Landscape, *Landscape Research*, 38:3, 394-400, DOI: [10.1080/01426397.2012.695015](https://doi.org/10.1080/01426397.2012.695015)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/01426397.2012.695015>



Published online: 30 Jul 2012.



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SHORT COMMUNICATION

# Landscape Underwater, Underwater Landscapes: Kangaroo Island Diving Site Names as Elements of the Linguistic Landscape

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**ABSTRACT** *A linguistic and cultural analysis of diving site names and their role as toponyms is absent in scuba diving tourism research and landscape research. This paper argues for using place-names for the identification of historical landscape features and that diving site names as place-names and historical landscape features could be of interest for creating and documenting coastal and underwater landscape inventories. It claims that diving site names of Kangaroo Island, South Australia, and diving site toponymy in general, are linguistic ephemera linked to tourism activities, which may provide a greater understanding of the 'linguistics of landscape', the 'linguistic landscape', and the 'landscape of language'. In conclusion, this paper speculates about the function of diving site names as worthwhile pilgrimage locations connected with tourism of particular cultural landscapes.*

**KEY WORDS:** Diving site names, toponymy, linguistic landscape, language and pilgrimage

## 1. Introduction

In this short communication I present a list of diving site names collected during linguistic fieldwork on Kangaroo Island, South Australia (see Table 1 and Figure 1 for an image of the landscape). In addition to the names and their analysis, I put forward diving site names as a worthy taxon of an area's unofficial folk toponymy of interest to landscape researchers, toponymists, linguists, and tourism researchers. Apart from Clark's (2002) anecdotal descriptions of Hawai'i diving sites, Coleman's (1991) scant yet popular description of several of Norfolk Island diving sites,<sup>1</sup> and other research on the role of scuba diving in scientific monitoring and (fishing) resource management (Barker & Roberts, 2004; Davis & Tisdell, 1995; Hawkins & Roberts, 1992; Hawkins *et al.*, 1999) incorporating diving sites in an *ad hoc* fashion as part of locating their data collection, a linguistic and cultural analysis of diving site names and their role as toponyms is absent in scuba diving tourism research and landscape research.<sup>2</sup>

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**Table 1.** Kangaroo Island diving site names

Name	Details
1. Alex Lookout	A diving site name corresponding to the same place-name on the northern coast of the island.
2. American River/Pelican Lagoon	A dual name describing a diving site near the shore at American River, one of the island's main settlements, in the greater Pelican Lagoon area.
3. Ballast Head	The location of a dive near in to the shore at Ballast Head on Kangaroo Island's north coast.
4. Cable Hut Bay/Cable Hut Reef	The location of where a telecommunications cable from the Australian mainland comes ashore. Located approximately three kilometres east of Penneshaw, the main settlement in the eastern part of Kangaroo Island.
5. Christmas Cove	A dive site close to Penneshaw where a modern marina was recently constructed.
6. Cormorant Reef	Named by the experienced diver due to the large number of cormorant birds at this point just west of Kangaroo Head near Penneshaw.
7. Cuttlefish Reef	A reef named after the large amount of fish life it contains.
8. Ironstone Point	A diving site on the northeast coast discovered during the marine park monitoring program.
9. Kangaroo Beach	To the west of Snug Cove, this site is near Kangaroo Beach, a small sandy coastal strip which is not known as a swimming beach.
10. Kangaroo Head	A diving site slightly to the west of Penneshaw.
11. Knob Point	Located in Stokes Bay, to the north of Kingscote, the capital of the island, this dive drops off just out of the topographical site of Knob Point.
12. The Monument/The Monument Reef	This site is named after the terrestrial monument which was sighted when the diver who named the site surfaced after the dive.
13. Muston	A diving location in the shallow southern part of Pelican Lagoon near the small settlement of Muston and the Kingscote-Penneshaw Road.
14. Penneshaw Reef/Hog Bay Reef	Hog Bay is a former name for Penneshaw. This diving site is located in the cove shown in Figure 1.
15. Seal Rocks	A famous point on the north coast of Kangaroo Island, this topographical name is named in honour of the many seals which frequent the area.
16. Snapper Point Reef	The reef located near Snapper Point on the north east coast three kilometres east of Penneshaw.
17. Snug Cove	A dive site on the Kingscote side of the island.
18. Western Cove	A dive site on the extreme north of Kangaroo Island.

(Source: the author, 2009)

Kangaroo Island is Australia's third largest island. Its history is integral to South Australia's history; it is related to the colonial exploration and quest for the discovery of the 'Great Southern Continent', *Terra Australis*. Several volumes have chronicled and summarised the accounts of the first European explorers like Flinders, Baudin, Freycinet and Péron to name the island's coastline (e.g. Cooper, 1953). There has also been recent interest in the French voyage to Australia and



**Figure 1.** Penneshaw, Dudley Peninsula, Kangaroo Island, South Australia.

particularly to the coast of South Australia (Fornasiero & West-Sooby, 2011). This research has highlighted how European contact through toponymy has become a part of the cultural landscape and history in South Australia and Kangaroo Island. What is also important for understanding the unofficial toponymy on Kangaroo Island is the role tourism has played and continues to play. Place-naming creates links between previously unmapped landscapes and represents how through the naming of landscapes, and even underwater landscapes, places are created, remembered, and travelled to. Taking a similar approach to Calvo-Iglesiasa *et al.* (2011), I argue for the potential for using place-names to identify historical landscape features and that diving site names as place-names and historical landscape features could be of interest for creating and documenting coastal and underwater landscape inventories. I also claim that Kangaroo Island diving site names and diving site toponymy in general are linguistic ephemera linked to tourism activities; they are linguistic devices connected intrinsically with and to landscape. I speculate about the function of diving site names as worthwhile pilgrimage locations connected with tourism of particular cultural landscapes.

The list of names presented in Table 1 was collected on 20 February 2009 at Baudin Beach (formerly American Beach), Dudley Peninsula, Kangaroo Island,

South Australia. I interviewed an experienced diving operator who knew a large number of diving site names mainly off the northern coast of the island. The names came about during the monitoring program conducted by the South Australian Government in 1998 for the development of an offshore marine park between Ironstone Point and Cable Hut Bay on the northern coast of Kangaroo Island. While most of the diving site names have a terrestrial and topographical equivalent toponym, there are two original names related exclusively to diving activities and the relationship between diving and the natural and cultural landscape of the island.<sup>3</sup>

## 2. Analysis

- (1) Pre-existing toponyms are productive as diving site names, for example, Christmas Cove, Western Cove.
- (2) Only two names (one of them a doublet—two different names for the same place) are not a pre-existing toponym, that is, Cormorant Reef, The Monument/The Monument Reef.
- (3) Generics (bay, reef) can be added to pre-existing toponyms to create diving site names, for example, Cable Hut Bay/Cable Hut Reef, Snapper Point Reef.
- (4) Doublets are productive, for example, Penneshaw Reef/Hog Bay Reef.
- (5) There is only one eponymous diving site name, that is, Alex Lookout.

These name patterns share the same syntactic and semantic structure as other English (colonial) place-naming patterns, that is, (proper) noun + generic noun, on Kangaroo Island (see Nash, 2011) and elsewhere in Australia (e.g. Tent & Slatyer, 2009). In order to explicate the cultural tourism and connectedness-to-landscape element of this data, I will analyse two names—Alex Lookout and Penneshaw Reef/Hog Bay Reef.

### *Alex Lookout*

This geographical name is also known as Alec Lookout or Alecs Lookout. It was named after an old-time whaler, who used this high point on the coast to sight what then constituted his harvest of the sea. While applying the same name to a diving site does not create any semantic or locational ambiguity, it creates tension between the naming of onshore and offshore landscapes. The terrestrial Alex Lookout is easily located; the offshore location remains much more hidden. The possibility of travelling to the diving site Alex Lookout requires accompanying a ‘knower’ of this place, a guide with knowledge of the ‘landscape underwater’, someone who provides a practical cultural yet liminal link (see Turner, 1986) to the terrestrial place Alex Lookout. This knowledge linking the onshore with the offshore and processes of this association of ‘toponymic attachment’ (Kostanski, 2009) or reinterpreting (the) landscape in terms of emotional connectivity (see Basso, 1996) demonstrates the evocative power of diving site names as toponyms. The (linguistic) landscape link between ‘the onshore’ and ‘the offshore’ forms an emotional geography (see Davidson & Milligan, 2004; Davidson *et al.*, 2005) which is both documentable

scientifically and perceivable in terms of its ability to be travelled to and experienced (see Straughan's 2010 account of being 'touched by water' during the scuba diving experience).

### *Penneshaw Reef/Hog Bay Reef*

Toponym doublets involve and implant different and differing senses of place. Although not a dual language name as in the official renaming of Adelaide's Victoria Square as 'Victoria Square/Tardanyangga', representing practices common in reinstating Australian Aboriginal toponyms (see Hodges, 2007), Penneshaw Reef/Hog Bay Reef, despite being the same physical place, conjures up distinct representations of what these (geographical) places mean by themselves and how they can be interwoven into a reading of the offshore and underwater (linguistic and cultural) landscape. Penneshaw is a blend derived from combining the names of Dr F.W. Pennefather and Flora Louisa Shaw, two South Australian dignitaries at the time of colonisation of South Australia, while Hog Bay is a name given by British explorer Matthew Flinders (Cockburn, 1984) in memory of the hordes of pigs who used to migrate down to the sandy shore. As a result, knowledge of these elements of the (topographical) landscape inculcates two histories: the syntactically first and semantically central being a colonial and official nomenclature, the syntactically second assuming a less central but possibly more accurate (semantic) description of the natural ecology at the time of naming (1802) by Flinders, a figure who has since achieved folkloric status and appeal within the human and toponymic remembrance of Kangaroo Island.

These two distinct conceptions of this diving site name are connected historically to the two distinct (topographical) landscape histories in the name. What is not clear, however, is how these names differ in how they are travelled to and perceived, and the methods by which diving here, inhabiting this place/these places, and moving through them takes place. The liminal aspect of diving (Turner, 1986), its 'non-ordinary' experience as a function of pilgrimage (Nash & Chuk, forthcoming), and the coming together of often conflicting linguistic and cultural memes are all at play when diving site names as 'toponyms with cultural commodity' come into contact with what can be perceived as an ordinary tourism experience. In this sense, diving site names re-interpret Straughan's (2010) 'touched by water' into 'touched by names' or 'touched by language', where language is names embedded in and creating tenuous relationships with ephemeral and 'hard-to-pin-down' landscapes and places.

### **3. Conclusion**

Presenting a list of Kangaroo Island diving site names has not only put forward that this hitherto unexplored toponymic taxon may be of theoretical importance to language documentation for tourism and landscape research purposes, but the analysis has been effective at allowing a rich interpretation of esoteric and generally undocumented landscape terminology in terms of its ability to (re-)create, (re-)interpret, and maintain links between people, landscape, and language. By focusing on the unofficial and ephemeral nature of the names and the fragile grip these names possess as they exist within a specific (underwater) toponymic landscape, I have



used a small case study of names as a microscope to speculate about general principles and suggested that an analysis of diving site names and ‘landscape underwater’ worldwide may provide a greater understanding of the ‘linguistics of landscape’ (Mark *et al.*, 2011a, p. 3), the ‘linguistic landscape’ (e.g. Shohamy & Gorter, 2009), and the ‘landscape of language’ (Mark *et al.*, 2011b).

## Notes

1. While other popular publications by authors such as Coleman and his research in the Seychelles (2006) and Fiji (2005) should also be considered for documentation of global diving site names, the theoretical insight these publications give cannot be taken seriously.
2. A more detailed analysis of Norfolk Island diving site names is outlined in Nash and Chuk (forthcoming).
3. I will not present a map of the location of the diving site names. My primary concern in this article is their cultural import to landscape research rather than their precise locations.

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