

OzPic: *Picturing the Australian Environment*

MACQUARIE DICTIONARY & ABC LOCAL RADIO

www.macquariedictionary.com.au/ozpic

The *Macquarie Dictionary* has many items within its wordlist that relate to the physical features of the Australian landscape – *creek, gully, lagoon, billabong*, etc. But we strongly suspect that there are more words for the environment that we have yet to discover.

This joint project between the ABC and Macquarie Dictionary aims to uncover some of those words and to supplement the definition given in the dictionary with a photograph – not just one picture but one from each region of Australia so that we can see how billabongs vary across the country, how the sandstone cliffs of the Blue Mountains differ from the granite rocks of the Tasmanian Tiers, and uncover other hidden gems along the way.

The starting point will be a regular radio program featuring a particular word, or words, each week related to a particular feature of the environment with information provided by the Macquarie Dictionary Editor, Susan Butler. She will talk about the origin of the word, how it has been used over the last two hundred years, and how our collective feelings may have changed in relation to the word.

Listeners to the regional radio programs will be invited to submit a word and/or a photo to the Macquarie Dictionary website.

The radio program will run from early July to the end of 2015.

Word Stories

The following are some items with interesting histories that will be covered in the radio program:

billabong
bombora
bush
creek
donga
forest
gully
mallee
mangrove
plaints
scrub
soak
swamp

Regionalisms

There will be much to talk about on radio because, although the provision of photographs is the emphasis, the project is as much about the words as the pictures. The contributions that we hope will be made of very regional items such as *jump-up* and *scrape* will provide material for discussions of regional features and use of such terms.

A *jump-up* is one of the more unusual landscape features that I was hoping to have illustrated. In talking to someone about this, I found that initially they thought that they knew what I was referring to, but were then puzzled when I started talking about *mesa* as the more general term. It turned out that the confusion arose from their experience of jump-ups in the Kimberley where a *jump-up* was a location along a track that presented a difficulty.

In doing further research I found that there are some placenames in Western Australia that feature the term. And I found the following travel diary which gives a clearer picture. It also mentions a gravel scrape. There is no definition of *scrape* in the dictionary which explains what this might be.

So I suspect that there are a lot of such regional terms for features of the landscape which have still not made it into the dictionary.

~ Susan Butler

Photos

We invite you to send us photos that depict an aspect of the Australian environment around you, accompanied by a short description of the subject of the photo and where it was taken. All photos should be uploaded via the [Add a photo page on the Macquarie Dictionary website](#).

From these submissions the editors will make a selection of interesting photos to share on the website and/or social media for the duration of the project.

Inclusion of photos in the Macquarie Dictionary Online

At the end of the project, The Editor will make a final decision on images to add to the online version of the dictionary to illustrate the words that relate to the Australian environment.

To enter the photo competition you must submit your photo via the Macquarie website while the project is running (between July and December 2015), and agree to the terms and conditions listed on the Add a photo page. The Editor's decision is final.

New words will also be selected and incorporated at the same time.

New words

We are also looking for any words relating to the Australian environment that are used in your locality but which are not in the Macquarie. Or perhaps the word is in the dictionary, but it's used differently in your neck of the woods. Any new words or definitions can be submitted via the [Add a word page on the Macquarie website](#).