



Reading the Gaelic Landscape: Leughadh Aghaidh na Tìre

John Murray

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This book is a must for anyone who is interested in the Scottish Highlands and its ancient tongue. It will encourage people to read and understand the seemingly obscure Gaelic words and also provides an insight into landscape history. The text will enrich the experience of walkers, climbers, sailors, bird watchers and fishers by sketching the Gaelic context where they enjoy and pursue their interests. Outdoor enthusiasts will no longer struggle with unfamiliar spellings and words as they will acquire a new dimension of place through an understanding of place names in the Highlands.

The book takes a unique and comprehensive approach, as it expands and categorizes current place name vocabulary and provides commentaries on Gaelic ecology, culture and landscape between each section. Specific themes explored include how Gaelic poets like Sorley MacLean and Duncan Bàn MacIntyre used Highland landscape symbolically in their work. The lyrical traditional of the sheiling and Fingalian legend is connected in this way as well. Place names are also used to speculate about species extinctions and the history of the mythical Caledonian Forest. Readers will learn about diverse aspects of place and how these have been recorded, through a deeper understanding of a language, specific to the landscape of the Scottish Highlands, and unique in its perception of that landscape.

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