

In the Scottish highlands – Author Babette Newsome

Gaelic is the Celtic language of Scotland, which almost died out in the late 19th and 20th centuries. However, the language survives in parts of the Scottish Highlands and islands. Of course, Gaelic can still be encountered everywhere in Scottish place names. As walkers in Britain know, names of Scottish mountains are almost all Gaelic, but what many don't realise is that these names are very descriptive of the landscape's features.

A. Here you have the names of various Scottish Highland mountains and places, can you match them to the correct English translation?

	Gaelic name
1.	CarnDearg
2.	MeallDearg
3.	MeallGarbh
4.	Sgurr Fiona
5.	SgurnaCiche
6.	SgurrMhor
7.	CreagMhor
8.	GarbhBheinn
9.	FionnBheinn
10.	An Teallach
11.	Innis nanDamh
12.	CarnGorm
13.	GarbhChoichMhor
14.	CreagnaDamh
15.	BeinnTeallach
16.	MeallGorm
17.	CarnMorDearg



Scottish road sign: Gaelic names first, anglicised names underneath each Gaelic name.

	English translations:	Number match (1-17?)
a.	rough lumpy hill	
b.	big red hill	
c.	white mountain	
d.	island of the stags	
e.	blue hill	
f.	rough mountain	
g.	big rough breast	
h.	big peak	
i.	green lumpy hill	
j.	red hill	
k.	the fireplace	
l.	peak of the breast	
m.	white peak	
n.	big rock	
o.	red lumpy hill	
p.	fireplace mountain	
q.	rock of the stag	

B. You probably noticed that Gaelic has many more words to describe different types and shapes of hills and mountains than English; not surprising when you consider that most of the UK's mountains are in Scotland. However, English (like many European languages) has two distinct adjectives, where Gaelic makes do with only one. Can you name this one Gaelic descriptive word for which English has two separate words?