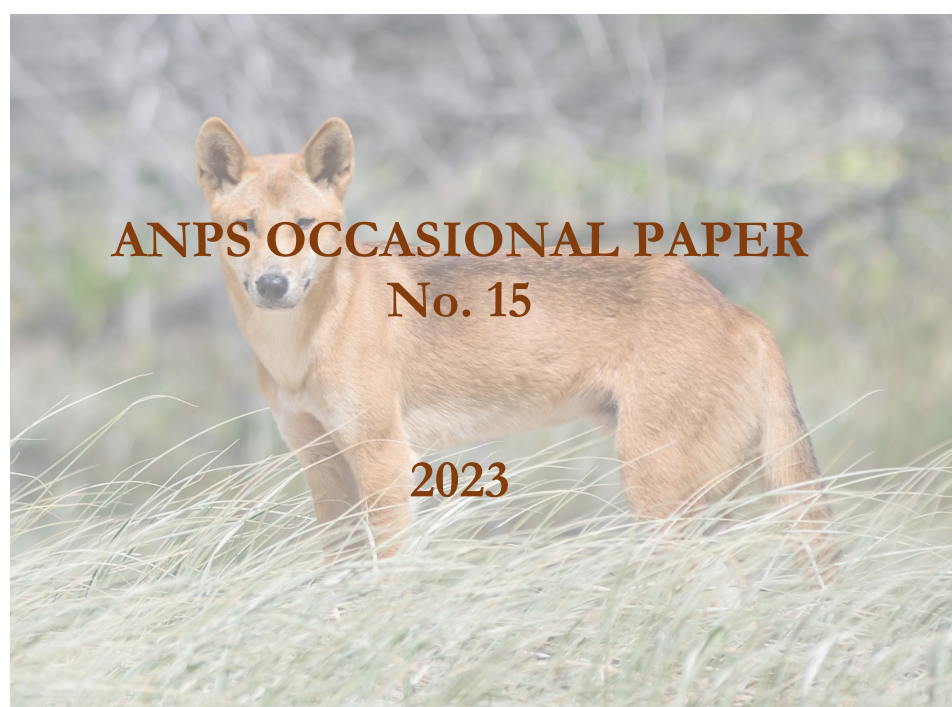


A Southeastern Dog Country



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Jim Wafer and Tracey Howie

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1 THE DOG DREAMING IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Recognition of the linguistic unity of the coastal region between the Hunter and Hawkesbury Rivers in NSW has been slow,¹ but it is supported by an ever-increasing body of evidence, much of it toponymic, that shows the same *cultural* coherence for the wedge of country that stretches from the mid-Hunter (Mount Wambo) to Nobbys Head (Whibayganba) and down to Barrenjoey Head.² There are 25 placenames in this region that potentially³ incorporate the word for ‘dog’, and together they constitute about 10% of the total number of Indigenous toponyms that have been recorded in this area. Such a high proportion suggests strongly that this is Dog Country.⁴



Figure 1.

The coastal region of NSW, between the Hunter and Hawkesbury Rivers

Dogs arrived in Australia roughly 4000 years ago. It is notable that the relevant date-range⁵ coincides with the Holocene ‘intensification’ and the introduction into the continent of ‘the Australian Small Tool Tradition, the appearance of plant-processing technologies, and the (assumed) date for the expansion of the Pama-Nyungan language in most of Australia.’⁶

The influence of dogs on the ecology and culture of the continent has been deep, to the extent that, in some places, dogs are held to be the ancestors of humans. In the Origin

Times, 'dingo and human were one'.⁷ Dale Kerwin has compiled a map that shows how the trade routes that crisscross Australia coincide, in many cases, with the tracks of the Two Dog Dreaming.⁸

But there is one major gap in this reconstruction of the Dog Dreaming's role in unifying Aboriginal Australia. Kerwin's map shows an almost complete blank in the southeast,⁹ in the region now constituted by NSW, Victoria and Tasmania.

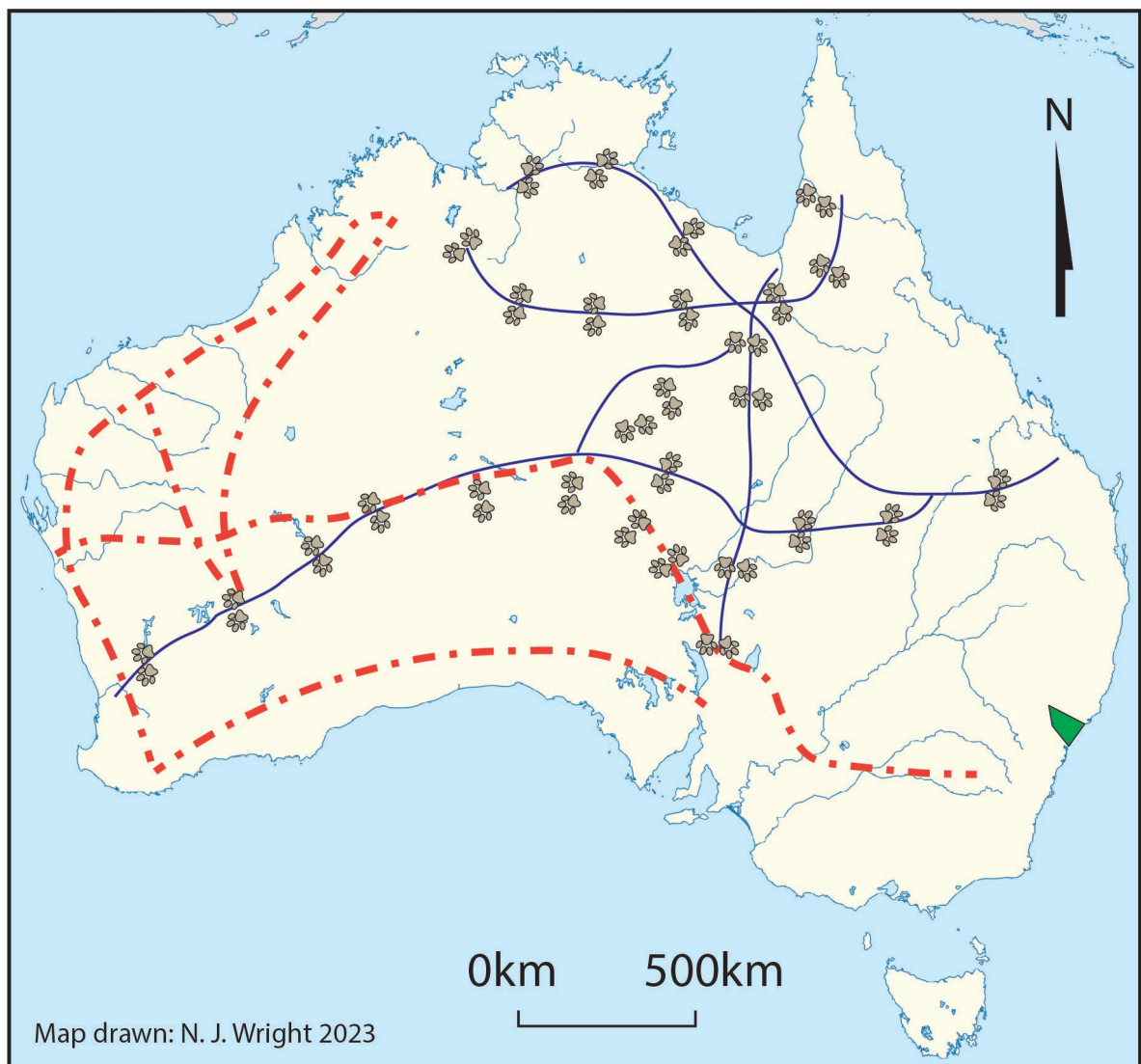


Figure 2.

Dog Dreaming tracks as summarised in earlier literature¹⁰

The green wedge on the right of the Australian landmass indicates the setting of the current article, that is, the Hunter River-Lake Macquarie-Central Coast region of NSW

We would not expect to find the Dog Dreaming in Tasmania, since dingoes did not ever reach there. But the present paper attempts to show that some reconstruction of the

southeastern Dog tracks is possible, at least in the Hunter River-Lake Macquarie-Central Coast region of NSW. Our argument is based largely on an analysis of the early Aboriginal placenames that were recorded in this area.

There are five different words for ‘dog’ in the published vocabulary of HRLMCC¹¹ (the acronym used for the language of the region), but only one of these—the word *wayi*—occurs with any frequency in the toponyms. Nonetheless, if we allow that the form *waany* also means ‘dog’ in this language¹² even though it is not in the standard sources, this increases the number of placenames with a canine referent from fifteen to twenty-five.¹³

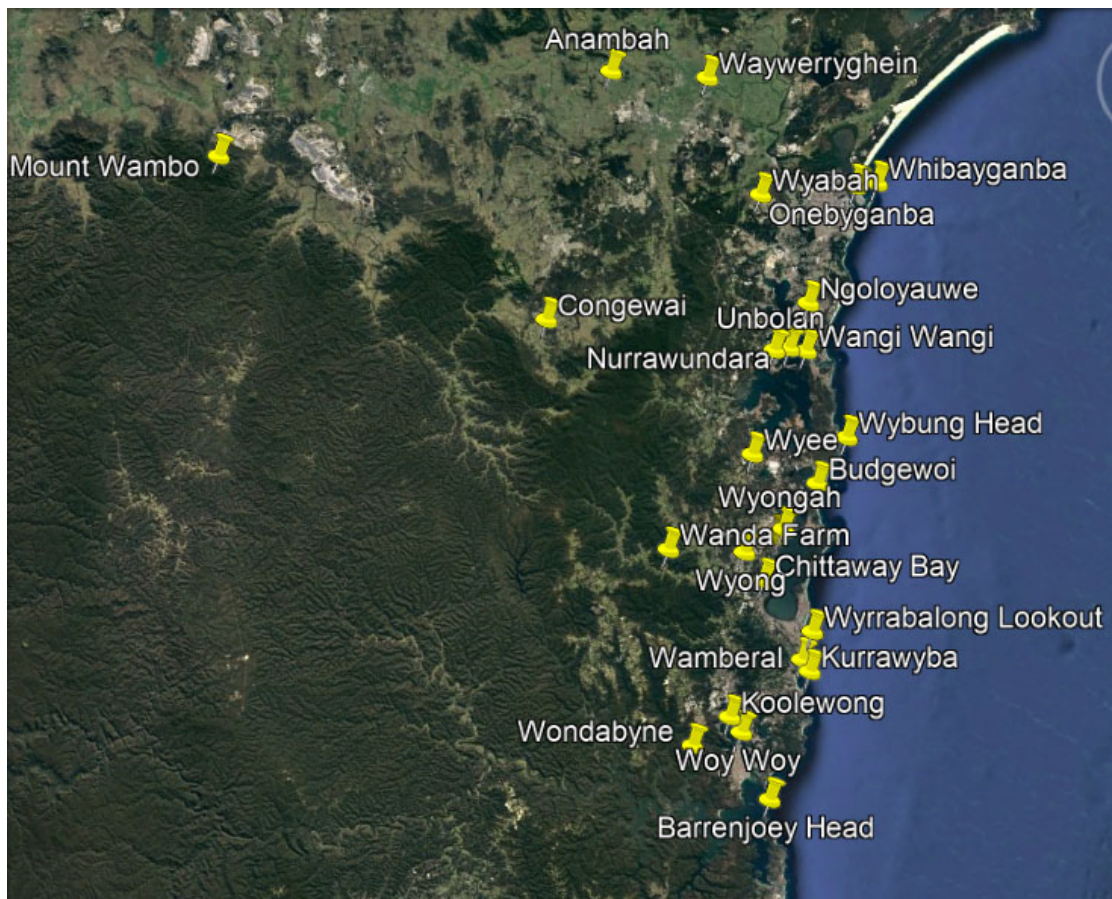


Figure 3.
Dog placenames in HRLMCC country

These twenty-five sites have been grouped geographically in the following maps and given reference numbers. The linguistic records suggest that the people who occupied this country before the invasion spoke three dialects of the same language, which we have labelled ‘western’, ‘eastern’ and ‘southern’.¹⁴ Accordingly, the sites likely to be associated with the Dog Dreaming are divided below into three sectors, each with a map and list of the relevant Dog places, including also hypothetical reconstructions and glosses of the toponyms.



Figure 4.
Dog sites on western dialect Country

Placename	Reconstruction	Gloss	Location	Attestation
1. Mount Wambo	<i>waany=pu</i>	solitary dog, 'the Dog Itself'	UiE ¹⁵	https://proposals.gnb.nsw.gov.au/public/geonames/95d2f5d5-1914-463b-af5c-38e08c283003
2. Congewai	<i>kanytja-wayi</i>	dog nest	UiE	https://proposals.gnb.nsw.gov.au/public/geonames/d7d684ca-e288-4832-93a3-1e9109fb2755
3. Anambah	<i>waany-ampa</i>	dogs' place	UiE	https://proposals.gnb.nsw.gov.au/public/geonames/756517c3-bb49-4d21-9ad7-0e703913dfcb
4. Waywerryghein	<i>wayi-wirrukany</i>	dog she-oak	Morpeth, Queens Wharf	Close, 1861 https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/70617067/6147328



Figure 5.
Dog sites on eastern dialect Country

5. Wyabah	<i>wayi-pa</i>	dog place	The Meadows Wyabah 'later named "The Meadows" between Tarro and Minmi' (Howey, 2023)	https://sconevedynasty.com.au/elliott-family-of-segenhoe-buttai/
6. Whibayganba	<i>wayi-pay-kany-pa</i>	place of the (female) dog	Nobbys Head	Mitchell, 1828
7. Onebyganba	<i>waany-pay-kany-pa</i>	place of the (female) dog	Carrington Island	Coulin, n.d., p.13
8. Ngoloyauwe	<i>ngulu-ya-wayi</i>	dog forehead	Belmont Point	Threlkeld, 1834, p.83. 'According to Haslam, this refers to Belmont Point' (Lissarague, 2006, p. 128). Mathew, 1831
9. Unbolan	<i>waany-pulany</i>	two dogs	Unnamed hill, NW side of Wangi Peninsula.	Mathew, 1831
10. Wangi Wangi	<i>waany-tji-waany-tji</i>	dogs	Wangi Point	Mathew, 1831; https://proposals.gnb.nsw.gov.au/public/geonames/f41f29eb-1636-4cc9-8dc8-4b5f562eb575
11. Nurrawundara	<i>nyarru-waany-tjarr</i>	mob of black dogs	Unnamed hill, middle of Wangi Peninsula.	Mathew, 1831



Figure 6.
Dog sites on southern dialect Country

12. Barrenjoey	<i>parrany-tja-wayi</i>	the dog(s) in the east	UiE	https://proposals.gnb.nsw.gov.au/public/geonames/dc44cfc9-e755-43c9-b4fd-aade10e372ca
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13. Wondabyne	<i>waany-tji-pany</i>	frequented by dogs	UiE	https://proposals.gnb.nsw.gov.au/public/geonames/91a42d2c-81ac-40f4-b927-a75dea9c0c46
14. Woy Woy	<i>wayi-wayi</i>	dogs	UiE	https://proposals.gnb.nsw.gov.au/public/geonames/f8af25b3-8920-4d4a-a905-fdf58d294ea3
15. Wamberal	<i>waany-parral</i>	white dog(s)	UiE	https://proposals.gnb.nsw.gov.au/public/geonames/f5679041-5167-4b17-9602-840d8b7bf414
16. Kurrawyba	<i>karra-wayi-pa</i>	place of the senior male dog(s)	Headland at Terrigal	https://proposals.gnb.nsw.gov.au/public/geonames/81a57948-8956-4045-b8f8-6f88f5a4d36e “Aboriginal name for The Skillion, Terrigal”
17. Wyrribalong	<i>wayi-rra-pulany</i>	two big dogs	Lookout N of Wamberal	https://proposals.gnb.nsw.gov.au/public/geonames/e87e4e76-c51e-4371-9edc-97dd8025671c
18. Chittaway Bay	<i>tjirriji-wayi</i>	red dog(s)	UiE	https://proposals.gnb.nsw.gov.au/public/geonames/ad873013-f27f-4f13-9432-04bdcd616ad4
19. Wanda Farm	<i>waany-tja</i>	at the dog place	On Wyong Creek	Swancott, 1963, p.73
20. Wyong	<i>wayi-ya-ny</i>	dog(s) go(es)	UiE	https://proposals.gnb.nsw.gov.au/public/geonames/a94dd537-20cc-4f41-96b6-132b9cbbecbc
21. Wyongah	<i>wayi-yanyka-a</i>	dog(s) went forth	UiE	https://proposals.gnb.nsw.gov.au/public/geonames/bbd96883-1209-4c26-ace7-53ecc8c508f9
22. Tuggerawong	<i>tjakarra-waany</i>	grass-tree resin dog(s)	UiE	https://proposals.gnb.nsw.gov.au/public/geonames/97b0e59f-6492-41f7-99ef-8e7426c70aab For this interpretation of tuggera , see A.H.S., 1931 (interview with Mrs E. Hargraves): https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/16754310
23. Budgewoi	<i>patji-wayi</i>	wild dog(s)	UiE	https://proposals.gnb.nsw.gov.au/public/geonames/1a9463a5-ccad-44a1-b572-3deb2a4cfc28
24. Wyee	<i>wayi</i>	dog(s)	UiE	https://proposals.gnb.nsw.gov.au/public/geonames/7a887018-d9ab-4268-8348-e19cb27085a5
25. Wybung Head	<i>wayi-pany</i>	frequented by dogs	UiE	https://proposals.gnb.nsw.gov.au/public/geonames/ea0a500e-5df6-4116-b9e2-6c7bc2db78cb

The three preceding groups of toponyms all pertain to the HRLMCC language. But we include below, as well, the canine toponyms in the Upper Hunter dialect (which belongs to a different group of languages), as a guide to the geographical relationship between the two language groups.¹⁶ It seems at least plausible that the Dog Dreaming entered HRLMCC

Country from the inland side of the Great Dividing Range, passing through the gap afforded by the Hunter River.



Figure 7.
Dog sites on Upper Hunter Country

26. Bimboorum	<i>bin-burum</i>	dog ear	Muswellbrook	Keys, 1854. The source spells the word as ‘Bimboorien’ but this is likely to be a misprint of ‘Bimboorum’.
27. Boorumboolah	<i>burum-bula</i> ¹⁷	two dogs	St Heliers	Keys, 1854. The source spells the word as ‘Boorumbeelah’ but this is likely to be a misprint of ‘Boorumboolah’.
28. Millboorum	<i>mil-burum</i>	dog eye	Bells Mountain	Keys, 1854. https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/132401971

2 THE DOG DREAMING AND ITS CONNECTIONS

W. R. F. Love has compiled abundant evidence for the significant role played by dingoes in men’s ritual life throughout NSW, first attested by David Collins in an account he published of the Yoo-lahng ceremony he witnessed at Farm Cove in 1795.¹⁸ The ‘dingo routine’, as Love calls it,¹⁹ was clearly also performed in the HRLMCC region, and attended by Lancelot Threlkeld in 1825 or 1826.²⁰

The fact that this dance and the associated stories are ‘men’s business’ in some places raises obvious ethical questions about publishing the placenames. However, women were present during the 1795 Yoo-lahng ceremony, and the toponyms themselves have never been secret. Many of them are in everyday use as names for suburbs or natural features.

The late Deborah Rose, who has written two brilliant books about the relationship between Aboriginal people and dingoes, recounts an episode that casts some light on the question:

Old Tim Yilngayari told about the dingo origins of humans on a number of occasions. The stories are told in an elliptical style because some of the knowledge and ritual relating to dingos belong to a domain that is exclusively controlled by men. Old Tim told this story for a mixed audience.

The implication is that the Dog Dreaming has a public side, accessible to all, and a secret/sacred side—which we will avoid touching on here. We note, however, the interesting observation made by Koungolos & Fillios (2020) that the dingo’s ‘spiritual

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importance transcends clan boundaries.²¹ Possibly the connection between the Moon, the Dog and the origin of Death is more widespread in Australia than the couple of examples given by Venbrux (2020). From an even broader comparative perspective, humans and dogs have co-evolved,²² with ‘the dog [as] the animal pivot of the human universe’.²³

The canine characteristics apparent in the reconstructed toponyms, such as colour (black, white, red); number (one, two, many); gender (male, female) and relationship (wife, cross-cousin), are undoubtedly indicative of a story—or of a number of related stories. These may take some time to rebuild, but fortunately there are a few clues to provide direction.

In other parts of Australia, the Dog’s most common mythological connections are with the Moon²⁴ and the Emu.²⁵ In the Emu episodes, two or more Dogs chase a single Emu. At the end of the segment, one of the animals bleeds to death. This can result from an attack by the Dogs, as in the case of the Emu; or when one (at least) of the Dogs is female, the bleeding may be caused by childbirth. The blood congeals as red ochre.²⁶

The Moon episodes also concern mortality, but in these the Dog is usually the victim of a trick by the Moon, the segment being an explanation of the origin of death.²⁷ The Moon and Emu stories are not necessarily linked together in the sources, and in some places the Emu’s role is taken by the Kangaroo. But in the HRLMCC region, the proximity of the Dog, Moon and Emu sites suggests a possible narrative connection between them. This is illustrated in the following map.

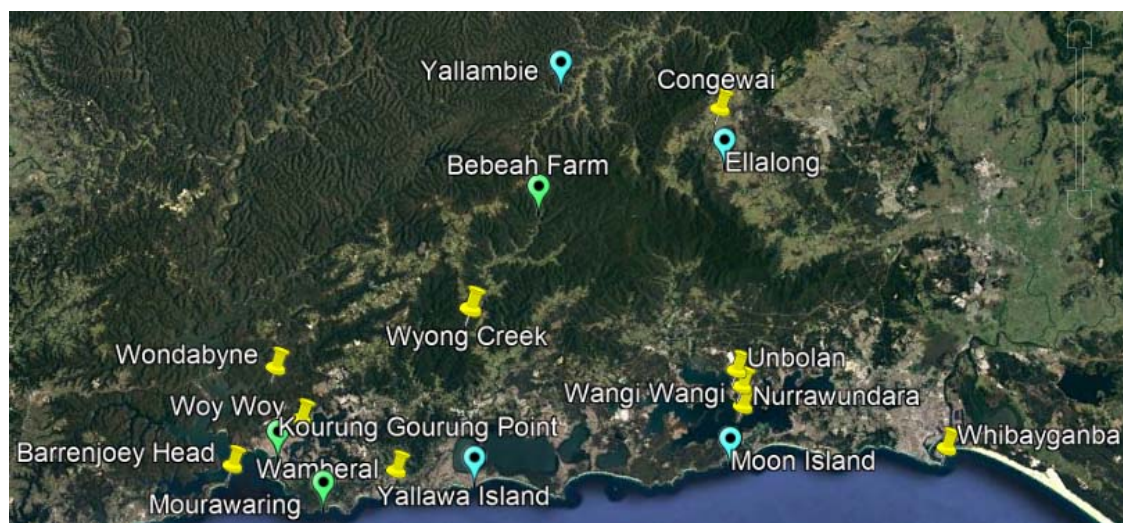


Figure 8.
Moon and Emu sites on HRLMCC Country

Moon sites are indicated by blue pins, Emu sites by green pins. To avoid clutter, only the Dog sites closest to these two Dreamings are shown; these are indicated with yellow pins. (Details of the other Dog sites are provided above.)

29. Yallambie	<i>yalany-pi</i> (or <i>yalany-pay</i>)	moon (complementary moiety?)	Near Laguna, on the Great North Road.	https://proposals.gnb.nsw.gov.au/public/geonames/666a45ec-069e-4d6e-8358-6d29f7188384
30. Ellalong Lagoon	<i>yala-lang</i>	having moon, Moon Country	SW of Cessnock	https://proposals.gnb.nsw.gov.au/public/geonames/b9ec4

31. Yallawa Island	<i>yala-[u]wa</i>	moon go	In the channel at The Entrance	895-543e-4a44-88e9-aa4af18bb741 https://proposals.gnb.nsw.gov.au/public/geonames/d52bd36e-155d-40f1-ac0d-852d3f43ed03
32. Moon Island	<i>nyirritji-pa</i>	mutton-bird place	Offshore from Swansea Channel. Note that Google Maps shows 'Moon Island' as being a clearly distinct entity from the island called 'Moon Island Nature Reserve' (also known as 'Green Island'). Both are close to the entrance to Swansea channel, but only the former is submerged by the tide.	Lissarrague, 2006, p.129. Fuller (2020, pp.112-113) notes 'at Coffs Harbour, NSW, . . . there is a Moon rising place over Mutton Bird Island.' The same semiotic link between Moon and Mutton Bird seems to apply to the Moon Island off Swansea Channel - Nirritiba in Threlkeld's transcription (1834, p.83). https://proposals.gnb.nsw.gov.au/public/geonames/2b123cee-6d85-438b-98fd-4d235f43267b
33. Kourung Gourung Point	<i>kuungkourung</i>	emu	Wagstaffe, Brisbane Water	https://proposals.gnb.nsw.gov.au/public/geonames/9413b7ba-0f38-402f-93bf-d8ecebe16418
34. Mourawaring	<i>maarring</i>	emu	Just south of MacMasters Beach = Second Point	https://proposals.gnb.nsw.gov.au/public/geonames/b3210dda-7a83-450c-846e-67c289c340bc
35. Bebeah Farm	<i>payi-payi</i>	emu	North of Yarramalong	https://proposals.gnb.nsw.gov.au/public/geonames/27141f6d-1c7a-4ffa-a1bf-7fe563f6cb32

At this point of our research, we have found (potential) Emu sites only on the Country of the southern dialect group. On the other hand, there is at least one Moon site on the Country of each of the three dialect groups (and two in the western dialect Country).

The semantic link between the Moon and the two islands that lie at the entrance to two of the major coastal lakes (Tuggerah and Macquarie) is, we would suggest, motivated by the common movement of waxing and waning. Both Moon sites are 'eroded islets' that appear and disappear gradually, according to the tides.²⁸ No doubt there are others among the 35 sites tabulated in this article that have figurative characteristics suggestive of the relevant Dreaming. These have the potential to contribute further to the development of the narrative.

Acknowledgements

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APPENDIX: Sources for gloss components

Introduction

The placenames in the table below are listed in the same sequence as in the main text (roughly north to south and west to east on the maps). The language of sites 1-25 and 29-35 is HRLMCC. The language of sites 26-28 is the Upper Hunter dialect of the Darling Tributaries language (UHD).

Each reconstruction in HRLMCC incorporates one or other of two words for ‘dog’: *wayi* or *waany*. The sources for these are not repeated in the following table. The earliest source we have found for *wayi* is Skottowe (1813, p. 35) **Whiee** ‘Native Dog’, followed by Threlkeld (1824, p. 130A) **Wy,ee** ‘Native Dog’. So far, we have not found *waany* used in the available vocabularies of HRLMCC, but it occurs in ten placenames (1, 3, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, 15, 19, 22), and there may be more still to be discovered. We have assumed that it was once used in HRLMCC, because the form *waanyji* ‘dog’ occurs in Gumbaynggirr (Morelli, 2015, p. 119), not far to the north of HRLMCC.

We have provided the earliest known source forms for the other lexical morphemes in this list (in bold type), but the grammatical morphemes (in italics) are written as reconstructed (and named) by Lissarrague (2006). The following abbreviations have been used for works that occur multiple times:

AGL03	Ash, Giacon, & Lissarrague, 2003
L2006	Lissarrague, 2006
T1824	Threlkeld, 1824
T1834	Threlkeld, 1834
T1857	Threlkeld, 1857

Details of all sources can be found in the list of references above.

Notes on the glossing

The suffixes *-pay* (sites 6, 7 and possibly 29) and *-kany* (6, 7) require a little introductory explanation. Lissarrague (2006, p. 64) calls *-pay* the ‘Kin-term suffix’. But it is applied only to kin who are members of the moiety complementary to that of the propositus. To illustrate: wife calls husband *puri-pay*, and husband calls wife *puri-kany-pay*. Note that the gender distinction between the two words for ‘spouse’ is specified by the suffix *-kany*. This morpheme has several different usages (see Lissarrague, 2006, p. 65), but, at least in the domain of kin terms, it generally means ‘female’. (See also Lissarrague, 2010, p. 47—‘Feminine *-gan*’.)

Because the HRLMCC kinship system is matrilineal, the ‘complementary’ moiety, which includes all of an individual’s potential spouses, consists of relatives of the individual’s father (*piyang-pay*). In a more general sense, *-pay* has roughly the meaning of ‘complement’. For example, the word *pila-pay* means ‘valley’, because it is the ‘complement’ of *pila* ‘stream, creek’.

So when *-pay* is used with either *wayi* (site 6) or *wany* (site 7) for ‘dog’, it is unclear whether this transforms the word into a relationship term, which would mean something like ‘dog of the other moiety’, or whether it carries a different sense. We assume that both dogs are female, because of the suffix *-kany*, but we are left with the question: in relationship to whom are they ‘complementary’ or ‘other moiety’? In other words, who is the propositus?

It could be a male dog (or dogs), and the most likely candidates are the (probably male) Dogs of site 10, 13 and 16. Alternatively, the two female Dogs could be in complementary moieties themselves (in which case, the most likely relationship between them would be ‘cousin sisters’, that is, ‘cross-cousins’).

The most speculative reconstructions are 20 and 21, because they are based on a conjectural proto-form. Our hypothesis is that we can reconstruct the proto-verb **ya* from such evidence as *yamama* (‘lead, guide’), *yalu* ‘sole’ and *yala* ‘ankle’ (Lissarrague, 2006, pp. 144-145).

Sources for gloss components

Placename	Reconstruction	Gloss	Sources
1. Mount Wambo	<i>waany=pu</i>	solitary dog	L2006:93 Exclusive <i>=pu</i>
2. Congewai	<i>kanytja-wayi</i>	dog nest	T1857:90 (Luke 9:58) kunta ‘nest(s)’
3. Anambah	<i>waany-ampa</i>	dogs’ place	L2006:42 Genitive <i>-ampa</i>
4. Waywerryghein	<i>wayi-wirrukany</i>	dog she-oak	Bowman, nd:13 wirrugane ‘oak–cassuarinae [<i>sic</i>]’
5. Wyabah	<i>wayi-pa</i>	dog place	L2006:63 Place <i>-pa</i>
6. Whibayganba	<i>wayi-pay-kany-pa</i>	female dog of complementary moiety	See ‘Notes on the glossing’, above.
7. Onebyganba	<i>waany-pay-kany-pa</i>	female dog of complementary moiety	See ‘Notes on the glossing’, above.
8. Ngoloyauwe	<i>ngulu-ya-wayi</i>	dog forehead	T1834:83 ngo-lo-yáu-wé.). ‘According to Haslam, this refers to Belmont Point’ (L2006:128).
9. Unbolan	<i>waany-pulany</i>	two dogs	L2006:40 <i>pulaN</i> ‘2 nd person dual’; two
10. Wangi Wangi	<i>waany-tji-waany-tji</i>	dogs	cf. Morelli, 2015, p.119, <i>waanyji</i> ‘dog’; function of reduplication unclear - plural?
11. Nurrawundara	<i>nyarru-waany-tjarr</i>	mob of black dogs	Larmer, 1834, p.1 Nurroo ‘black’ [Note also Naru Beach near Belmont.]
12. Barranjoey	<i>parrany-tja-wayi</i>	the dog(s) in the east	L2006:64 Plural 1 <i>-tjarr</i>
13. Wondabyne	<i>waany-tji-pany</i>	frequented by dogs	L2006:59 <i>paRa</i> ‘down’
14. Woy Woy	<i>wayi-wayi</i>	dogs	L2006:26 Locative <i>-tja</i>
15. Wamberal	<i>waany-parral</i>	white dog	L2006:66 Derivational <i>-paN</i> [‘habitually associated with’]
16. Kurrawyba	<i>karra-wayi-pa</i>	place of the senior male dog	See ‘Notes on the glossing’, above. Function of reduplication unclear. Plural?
17. Wyrrabalong	<i>wayi-rra-pulany</i>	two big dogs	Miller, 1886, p.355 barral ‘white’
18. Chittaway Bay	<i>tjirtji-wayi</i>	red dog	T1834:87 Kur-ra-kóng ‘first born male’
19. Wanda Farm	<i>waany-tja</i>	at the dog place	L2006:40 <i>pulaN</i> ‘2 nd person dual’, two; [-rra: augmentative?]
20. Wyong	<i>wayi-ya-ny</i>	dog is going	T1824:131A chïrr,ǎjeē-chïrr,ǎjeē ‘red’
21. Wyongah	<i>wayi-yanyka-a</i>	dog went forth	L2006:26 Locative <i>-tja</i>

22. Tuggerawong	<i>tjakarra-waany</i>	grass-tree resin dog	A.H.S., 1931 'Twixt Lake and Sea. <i>Sydney Morning Herald</i> Saturday 14 February 1931, p. 9. Includes interview with Elizabeth Hargraves of 'Norahville'. 'The blacks, says Mrs. Hargraves, were wonderful fishermen, with their long spears, or moutangs, pointed with a cluster of fine hardwood spikes, secured to the ends with vines and a gum named tuggerah, obtained from the grass tree.' https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/16754310
23. Budgewoi	<i>patji-wayi</i>	wild dog	T1834:99 Put-til-li-ko , 'to bite'.
24. Wyee	<i>wayi</i>	dog	See 'Introduction' to the Appendix.
25. Wybung Head	<i>wayi-pany</i>	frequented by dogs	L2006:66 Derivational paN ['habitually associated with']
26. Bimboorum	<i>bin-burum</i>	dog ear	AGL03:39 <i>bina</i> 'ear'
27. Boorumboolah	<i>burum-bula(arr)</i>	two dogs	AGL03:44 <i>bulaarr</i> 'two' or AGL03:38 <i>biila</i> 'daddy' AGL03:110 <i>mil</i> 'eye'
28. Millboorum	<i>mil-burum</i>	dog eye	
29. Yallambie	<i>yalany-pay</i> (or <i>yalany-pi?</i>)	moon (opposite moiety kin?)	T1824:131B yall,ĩna 'moon'
30. Ellalong Lagoon	<i>yala-lang</i>	having moon, Moon Country	L06:61 Proprietary <i>-lang</i>
31. Yallawa Island	<i>yala-[u]wa</i>	moon moving	T1834:102 U-wol-li-ko 'To come or to go; to walk, to move locomotively, to pass, ẽꞤc.'
32. Moon Island	<i>nyiritji-pa</i>	mutton-bird place	T1834:83 Nir-rit-ti-ba 'The name of the Island at the entrance of the lake, from Nir-rit-ti , the mutton bird which abounds there.'
33. Kourung Gourung Point	<i>kuungkurung</i>	emu	T1824:130B Koong,õr,õng 'emu'
34. Mourawaring	<i>maarriny</i>	emu	Miller, 1886, p.356 murrin 'emu'; cf. Sydney <i>murawung</i> 'emu' (Troy, 1994, p.54).
35. Bebeah Farm	<i>payi-payi</i>	emu	T1824:130B Bæe,bæe 'emu'

¹ The process of establishing this linguistic unity scientifically was begun by Arthur Capell (1970) more than 50 years ago. The most significant contribution in the intervening period has been Jo McDonald's 2008 study of rock art of the Sydney basin, which confirmed Capell's model of language distribution in the region using archaeological methods. See in particular the maps (McDonald, 2008, pp. 21, 351) that occur as Figures 3.3 and 13.1 in this brilliant piece of research.

² North and west of Mount Wambo lies a transitional zone between the coastal language HRLMCC (our initialism for *Hunter River Lake Macquarie Central Coast*) and the inland language, which Wafer (2014, p. 71) refers to as the 'Darling Tributaries' language. In this paper we call the dialect spoken north and west of Muswellbrook 'UHD' (Upper Hunter dialect of the Darling Tributaries language). Boorumboolah is one of three Dog placenames in the Muswellbrook region, all clearly derived from UHD *burum(a)* 'dog' (Ash, Giacom & Lissarrague, 2003, p. 49). These are in the vicinity of the natural passageway the Hunter River makes through the ranges (as visible in the Figure 1 map).

³ The reconstructions provided are hypothetical and may need revision or refinement after further research. The primary sources from which the toponymic and linguistic data have been assembled are referenced in the Appendix. Many of the morphemes used in the reconstructions are included in Lissarrague (2006).

Earlier literature on Aboriginal placenames of this region includes Threlkeld (1834, pp. 82-85), Keys (1854), Close (1861), Bennett (1968, pp. 17-19), Pratt (1978), Nicholls (2012) and Gounis (2021).

⁴ The focus of this paper is the body of placenames in the HRLMCC language. But we include here also some canine toponyms in the Upper Hunter dialect (UHD), as a guide to the geographical relationship between the two languages. ‘Boorumbolah’ is St Heliers and can be reconstructed as *burum-bula* ‘two dogs’ (Ash, Giacon & Lissarrague, 2003, p. 49).

⁵ 4,000 years BP (‘before present’) is the generally accepted estimate (Taçon & Pardoe, 2002, p. 60). Later dating offers a range between 3,000 and 3,500 years BP (e.g. Crowther et al., 2014, p. 192; Hull, 2018, p. 15), and earlier dating supplies a range between 5,000 (Crowther et al., 2014, p. 192) and 12,000 years BP (Fillios & Taçon, 2016, p. 7).

⁶ Witzel (2012, p. 293). Witzel presumably means ‘proto-Pama-Nyungan’. Since Harvey & Mailhammer (2017), linguists have been able to call this ‘proto-Australian’.

⁷ Rose (1992, p. 47).

⁸ Kerwin (2010, p. 90, map 5). The map redrawn above by N. J. Wright is based on a digital adaptation of Kerwin’s map by Franklin et al. (2021, p. 298).

⁹ The same gap occurs in the map of trade routes compiled by Bourke et al. (1980, p. 107), and also in the conjectured absence of dingo stories in the southeast (Fuller, 2020, p. 56, citing Tindale, 1984, p. 374). In fact, quite a lot of work has been done on trade in the southeast. See, for example, Peterson (n.d.), McBryde (1984) and McBryde (2000); but the research has been focused largely on the region south and west of the Murray. To date, no attempts have been made to link the southeastern trade routes with the Dog Dreaming.

¹⁰ The Dog Dreaming track is indicated by paw-prints and the solid blue line. The broken red line refers to other routes of long-distance travel across Australia, as detailed in the oral history collected by Muir and Nannup (in Kerwin 2012:40-44). Nathan Wright has kindly adapted the map that appears in Franklin *et al.* (2021:15) for the purposes of the present article. This new version is copyright N.J. Wright, 2023.

¹¹ Lissarrague (2006, p. 150) lists *varikal*, *marungkay*, *wayi*, *mirri* and *yuki*. (We would add *waany*.) There is no entry for ‘dingo’. Many Australian languages make the distinction between the ‘camp dog’ and the ‘wild dog’ or dingo, but in HRLMCC it is unclear which is which. The word *marrung-kay* is most likely to refer to the domesticated dog (*marrung* means ‘good’), and the placename Budgewoi (*patji-wayi* ‘biting dog’) could well be the word for ‘dingo’. But when Aboriginal people use the English term ‘dog’ (as in ‘Dog Dreaming’), this can usually be taken to refer to both sub-species, unless there’s a reason for making the distinction. This is how we use the word in this paper. Nonetheless, we accept the argument of Crowther et al. (2014, p. 201) that *Canis dingo* is ‘the correct binomial’ for the Australian species. Taçon & Pardoe (2002, p. 60) provide a rationale for using the scientific name *Canis lupus familiaris* for the domestic dog. As Koungoulos & Fillios (2020) note, there are good ecological reasons for maintaining the scientific distinction, despite the ambiguity that prevails in common parlance.

¹² There are three kinds of supporting evidence. [1] In Gumbaynggirr, spoken only a couple of river systems to the north of HRLMCC, the word for ‘dog’ is *waanyji* (Morelli, 2015, p. 119). Our assumption is that the root is *waany*. The second morpheme, *-ji* (which would be spelt as *-tji* in HRLMCC), is a suffix, possibly with suggestions of masculine gender (cf. Harvey & Mailhammer, 2017, p. 473). [2] In HRLMCC, there are a few animal names that incorporate the morpheme *wany*: *mu-wany* ‘kangaroo’; *kulu-wany* ‘koala’; *tjarr-any* ‘rufous rat-kangaroo’; *wany(i)-kany* ‘flying fox’. It appears to be some kind of classifying morpheme that is applied to mammals. The form *wa(a)ny-tji* (with vowel-length still to be determined) is evidently reserved for the only non-marsupial mammal present in Australia before the invasion. [3] The word for ‘(human) child’ in HRLMCC is *wanyay*, which is undoubtedly cognate with the preceding forms, and could perhaps be idiomatically translated as ‘pup’.

¹³ It is worth noting that the word *waanyi* persists today as both glottonym and ethnonym, in a region that is referred to as ‘Waanyi Country’ and is, moreover, said to be ‘a key junction for significant Dreaming tracks’ (Franklin et al., 2021, p. 13), including the ‘Wild Dog Dreaming’ (Taçon, 2008, p. 165). Waanyi Country is in northwest Queensland, in the southeastern corner of the Gulf of Carpentaria (see map in Taçon, 2008, p. 165). This region is favoured by scholars as one of the most likely entry points for the first dingoes to arrive in Australia (Fillios & Taçon, 2016, p. 3, map). Despite this history, the word for ‘dog’ in Waanyi is not *waanyi*. Mary Laughren (pers. com.) has ventured that Waanyi has other words for both ‘dog’ (camp dog, domesticated dog) and ‘dingo’ (wild dog). As in the case of HRLMCC, this apparent absence of the lexeme *waanyi* from recent records of the language could be explicable as an effect of the ‘no-name taboo’ (Simpson & Nash, 1981). On the other hand, no cognate morpheme is included in Capell’s ‘Common Australian’ (1956, pp. 87-115). Interestingly, in Waanyi’s neighbouring language, Garrwa, the word for ‘dog’ is *bajangu* (literally ‘biter’), which presumably has a genetic relationship, however distant, with the HRLMCC placename ‘Budgewoi’ (*patji-wayi*, ‘biting dog, wild dog’).

¹⁴ The descendants of these speakers identify today with the group labels ‘Wonnarua’, ‘Awabakal’ and ‘GuriNgai’. Until a clinal study of the distinctive features of these dialects becomes possible, it would be

fruitless to attempt any kind of geographical alignment between the clustering of linguistic characteristics and the ‘tribal’ terms. The modern glottonyms have become cadastral entities that are not necessarily reflective of the observable patterns of dialect variation. It is perhaps worth adding that the glottonym currently used for the western dialect appears to associate that dialect specifically with Dog Country. ‘Wonnarua’ is likely to be analysable as *waanyi-rruma*—that is, *waanyi* (‘dog’), with the addition of the perlativ suffix *-rruma* (‘through, via’).

¹⁵ UiE = Used in English. These placenames can be found on all (or at least most) of the maps in general circulation, such as Google Maps.

¹⁶ See also Wafer (2014). Wafer calls this group the ‘Darling Tributaries languages’.

¹⁷ The source form (in Keys, 1854) is spelt ‘Boorumbeelah’. If this is correct (and not a misprint), it would be reconstructible as *burum-biila* ‘Dog Daddy’ (Ash, Giacon & Lissarrague, 2003, pp. 49, 38).

¹⁸ Collins (1798, pp. 564-69).

¹⁹ Love (1988, pp. 354-356).

²⁰ Gunson (1974, p. 51).

²¹ Koungolos & Fillios (2020, p. 10).

²² Taçon & Pardoe (2002).

²³ White (1991, p. 15).

²⁴ See Rose (1992, pp. 47, 104 & *passim*); Rose (2011, p. 72 & *passim*); Venbrux (2010, p. 31); Waterman (1987, pp. 23-24, 51; 84).

²⁵ See Waterman (1987, pp. 23, 49, 50, 106); Fuller (2020, pp. 189-191); Taçon (2005, p. 36); Taçon (2008, p. 167).

²⁶ Taçon (2005, p. 36); Taçon (2008, p. 170).

²⁷ Venbrux (2010, p. 31).

²⁸ See also Morelli (2015, p. 53) and Murray (2016).