

An Litir Bheag le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

An Litir Bheag is a shortened and simplified version of Ruairidh's Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh (also available on the BBC website), designed for those who are at an earlier stage of learning Gaelic. The topic each week is the same as Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh so that, once the Litir Bheag is mastered, a student of the language might wish to try the full Litir. This is Litir Bheag 1003 (which corresponds to Litir 1,307). Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learngaelic.scot.

I was in Benbecula one time. Somebody said something to me about 'Stinky Bay' – a bay on the west side of the island. That surprised me because we were conversing in Gaelic. It appears that that's the name that is now used on the island – in English and Gaelic.

Washed-up piles of seaweed are on the beach there sometimes. When the seaweed is rotting, there is a smell.

If you are looking for Gaelic place-names of this type, keep [your] eyes out for the element breun – B-R-E-U-N. Here's what the Faclair Beag says. Breun: foetid, putrid, disgusting, filthy, nasty, stinking. It's not a commendation when it appears in a place-name!

In Fort William there is a big bay between the mouth of the Caledonian Canal and the mouth of the river. Its name is Am Breun Chamas. It's the seaweed that rots there that is responsible for the name.

In Jura, there are two places on the west coast called Breun Phort. Stinky Harbour. Breun Phort. I reckon that Brainport (B-R-A-I-N) on Loch Fyne in Argyll means the same thing.

Bha mi ann an Beinn nam Fadhla turas. Thuirte cuideigin rudeigin rium mu dheidhinn 'Stinky Bay' – camas air taobh an iar an eilein. Chuir sin iongnadh orm oir bha sinn a' còmhradh ann an Gàidhlig. Tha e coltach gur e sin an t-ainm a thathar a' cleachdadh a-nise anns an eilean – ann am Beurla agus Gàidhlig.

Bidh brùchdan feamainn air an tràigh an sin uaireannan. Nuair a tha an fheamainn a' grodadh, bidh faileadh ann.

Ma tha sibh a' coimhead airson ainmean-àite Gàidhlig dhen t-seòrsa seo, cumaibh sùil a-mach airson na h-eileamaid *breun* – B-R-E-U-N. Seo na tha am Faclair Beag ag ràdh. *Breun: foetid, putrid, disgusting, filthy, nasty, stinking.* Chan e moladh a tha ann nuair a nochdas e ann an ainm-àite!

Anns a' Ghearasdan, tha camas mòr ann eadar beul a' Chanàil Chailleannaich agus beul na h-aibhne. 'S e an t-ainm a tha air *Am Breun Chamas*. 'S e an fheamainn a bhios a' grodadh an sin as coireach ris an ainm.

Ann an Diùra, tha dà àite air a' chladach an iar air a bheil *Breun Phort* mar ainm. *Stinky harbour.* Breun Phort. Tha mi a' dèanamh dheth gu bheil Brainport (B-R-A-I-N) air Loch Fyne ann

Allt na Breun Choille and Cnoc na Breun Choille are in the upland of East Sutherland. I don't think there is any natural woodland there today. But there must have been at one time. And it must have been wet with a smell of decomposition.

In Glen Affric, in Inverness-shire, there is a place on the south side of Loch Beinn a' Mheadhain called Breun Leitir. I would expect that Breun Leitir means 'hillside that smells of decomposition'. However, the Ordnance Survey maintains that breun there means 'coarse'. I don't know what is correct but there is Sròn na Breun Leitir in Lochaber near Glen Quoich. The Ordnance Survey says that that means 'snout of the stinking or corrupt hillside'. I'm sure, on a dry sunny day, that the place is pretty enough!

an Earra-Ghàidheal a' ciallachadh an aon rud.

Tha Allt na Breun Choille agus Cnoc na Breun Choille ann am Bràigh Chat. Cha chreid mi gu bheil coille nàdarrach sam bith ann an sin an-diugh. Ach feumaidh gun robh uaireigin. Agus feumaidh gun robh i fliuch le faileadh de ghrodadh ann.

Ann an Gleann Afraig, ann an Siorrachd Inbhir Nis, tha àite air taobh a deas Loch Beinn a' Mheadhain air a bheil Breun Leitir. Bhithinn an dùil gu bheil Breun Leitir a' ciallachadh 'hillside that smells of decomposition'. Ge-tà, tha an t-Suirbhidh Òrdanais a' cumail a-mach gu bheil breun an sin a' ciallachadh 'coarse'. Chan eil fhios a'm dè tha ceart, ach tha Sròn na Breun Leitir ann an Loch Abar faisg air Gleann Cuaich. Tha an t-Suirbhidh Òrdanais ag ràdh gu bheil sin a' ciallachadh 'snout of the stinking or corrupt hillside'. Tha mi cinnteach, air latha tioram grianach, gu bheil an t-àite brèagha gu leòr!