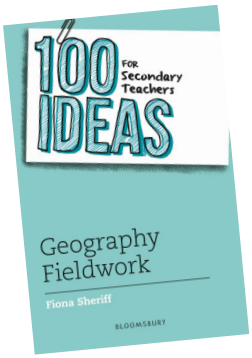
Book Reviews

Reviews Editor: Geoffrey Paterson



100 ideas for secondary teachers: Geography fieldwork.

By Fiona Sheriff. Bloomsbury Education, 2025,

136 pages, soft cover, ISBN 9781801994804
https://www.bloomsbury.com/au/

Fiona Sheriff's *100 Ideas for secondary teachers: Geography fieldwork* is a highly practical and inspiring guide that supports the teaching and learning of fieldwork in Geography. As a teacher, I found myself genuinely excited by the possibilities this book opens up for embedding fieldwork more creatively and frequently into classroom practice. Sheriff is transparent about the logistics involved in geography fieldwork, while also presenting it as an engaging and dynamic process that is accessible to teachers and students alike.

The book is neatly organised into ten parts, covering over 100 individual fieldwork ideas. These sections move logically from preparation and planning, through on-site investigations and practical classroom ideas, to data presentation, analysis, and evaluation.

Each Idea is presented with a bolded summary for quick reference, teacher quotes, side notes with teaching tips, and "Taking it further" prompts that encourage students to extend their geographical thinking. This format makes the resource user-friendly and ensures that it can be used as a manual to dip in and out of. Extra ready to download online resources are also a great bonus!

What stood out most was the breadth of fieldwork approaches. Sheriff addresses everything from the fundamentals of assembling an equipment set, to modern techniques using apps and virtual fieldwork tools. Particularly helpful are the suggestions for embedding fieldwork into everyday classroom learning and utilising the school grounds. For instance, students might survey cars in the carpark, assess traffic flow on nearby roads, or even conduct a simple observation from the classroom window. These simple ideas challenge the assumption that fieldwork must always take place on a full-day off-campus excursion, and provides teachers with practical ways to develop inquiry skills in everyday lessons.

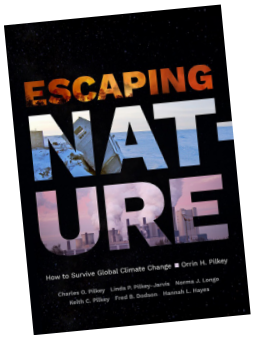
I enjoyed reading ideas about extending fieldwork into homework tasks. Sheriff's suggestions, such as collecting housing price data on a local street or sketching a local park, importantly offer alternatives to mundane homework tasks—and also helps to minimise students copying each other's work or relying on AI to generate responses (a constant battle that teachers are facing today).

As I am currently planning to facilitate my own excursions, I found Part 4: *On-site fieldwork* particularly useful. The dedicated sections on rivers, coasts, and human geography fieldwork (such as shopping surveys, and local land use mapping) provide numerous practical tips that I can adapt for my own teaching. Although the book is UK-based, its relevance to the Australian context is undeniable.

Importantly, the book covers all the key geographical concepts—space, place, interconnections, change, environment, sustainability, and scale—ensuring its applicability across all Stage 4 to Stage 6 units of work. It aligns closely with the new Stage 6 NSW Geography Syllabus, particularly considering the recent changes which now require 12 hours of fieldwork in both Year 11 and Year 12. The resource offers a range of ideas for Year 11 students undertaking the Geographical Investigation, particularly in developing and applying appropriate fieldwork methodologies. Therefore, I see it not only as a teacher's resource but also as a student resource, as they get inspired from browsing the different ideas.

Overall, *100 ideas for secondary teachers: Geography fieldwork* is a valuable, cost-effective resource. It combines practicality with creativity, providing teachers with an extensive toolkit to enhance geography teaching and make fieldwork an integral part of students' geographical learning.

Kate Sampson
Geography Teacher, Sydney NSW



Escaping nature: How to survive global climate change.

By Orrin H. Pilkey, Charles O. Pilkey, Linda P. Pilkey-Jarvis, Norma J. Longo, Keith C. Pilkey, Fred B. Dodson and Hannah L. Hayes. Duke University Press, 2024,

312 pages, soft cover, ISBN 9781478025443
https://www.dukeupress.edu/

This book presents a compelling thesis: in the face of climate change, humanity has only three choices—mitigate, adapt or suffer. Authored by the late Orrin H Pilkey, a widely recognised authority in coastal geology and co-written with six contributors (including three of his children), this book combines scientific evidence with personal narrative.

It features firsthand accounts such as the Pilkey's family escape from Hurricane Camille, alongside documented climate phenomena, including the 2015 northeastern Pacific marine heatwave known as "the Blob". The authors also provide pragmatic guidance for survival in extreme events—for example, advising that during a tornado, one should exit their vehicle and lie flat in a ditch, as far away from the car as possible. Structured into five thematic sections—Earth, Air, Fire, Water, and Space—each following a consistent format, the book delivers a sobering examination of the realities of climate change.

The *Earth* section opens with an exploration of geologic time, providing essential context for understanding natural climate variability and historical mass extinction events, before summarising key findings from the 2021 United Nations Climate Report. It proceeds to address critical issues such as famine and permafrost thaw, offering pertinent information for secondary geographic education, particularly in relation to NSW Stage 5 Biomes and Sustainable Agriculture and Stage 6 Human-Environment Interactions.

The *Air* chapter examines atmospheric hazards, with a particular focus on hurricanes and their associated impacts, including storm surges, coastal erosion and marine ecosystem degradation. The authors highlight the poleward shift of these events and provide advice that many Australians are familiar with, including practising dry-run evacuations. This section also addresses tornadoes, extreme heat and declining air quality.

The *Fire* section examines wildfires and urban firestorms, primarily from an American perspective, while also considering global lessons, including Australia's 2019–2020 Black Summer bushfires. Practical strategies can be incorporated into geography lessons for the Stage 5 Topic Environmental Change and Management, including learning from Indigenous people and structured debates evaluating the merits of relocating populations from fire prone regions.

The *Water* section covers sea level rises and identifies American cities that are most at risk, ocean acidification "climate change's evil twin", marine heatwaves, tsunamis, floods, drought and water supply. Practical measures to manage the impacts include building ice stupas and Warka Towers.

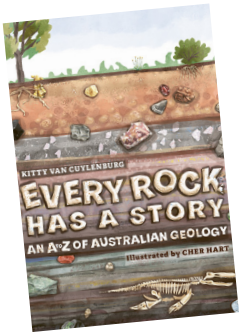
Space examines climate refugees, climate havens, green cities, health, nature on the move and the biosphere. Following these chapters is *The heart of the matter* which usefully summarises each chapter. This is followed by *New ideas* that provide a pertinent starting point for further student exploration such as assisted evolution and biochar.

Pilkey's *Escaping nature* offers valuable insights for geography education, with its clear structure enabling teachers to readily access targeted ideas for classroom application.

While the text conveys a serious account of climate challenges, it also identifies potential strategies for mitigation and adaptation that provide a degree of cautious optimism. Particularly noteworthy for the secondary geography classroom is the multitude of useful visuals, including the Venn diagram on page 3, which illustrates the relationship between adaptation, mitigation and suffering. This accessible visual device serves as an effective prompt for class discussions about the trade-offs, choices and consequences inherent in responding to climate change.

Overall, *Escaping nature* provides geography teachers with both a conceptual framework and practical tools to engage students in critically examining humanity's responses to climate change.

Stephanie Boden
Councillor, Geography Teachers Association of NSW ACT



Every rock has a story: An A to Z of Australian geology.

By Kitty van Cuylenburg. Illustrated by Cher Hart. CSIRO Publishing, 2025,

64 pages, hard cover, ISBN 9781486316731
https://www.publishing.csiro.au/

Each letter of the alphabet receives a leaf in this well-illustrated new book for younger readers suitable for Year 4 to Year 8.

From "A Artesian" to "Z Zircon" these geology terms include some minerals (halite, limestone), some rocks (dolerite, granite), some rock formations (nuggets, volcanoes), some landforms (Kosciuszko, Mount Augustus), and some general terms (fossils, resources, you).

Each of these alphabetic sections is very much more than a definition. A map of Australia sits in the top right corner to place either the keyword or an example of it on the continent. First Nation clans are included beneath the map. There is a larger map of Australia at the end of the book to give readers new to geology a better idea of the scope of earth sciences in Australia.

The illustrations are dominant in this book which will give new, weaker, or reluctant readers a keen sense of what the keywords mean before they read the text. For older young readers, such as my own junior secondary students, this book was a good example of how to illustrate science information.

The text is thoughtfully broken up with a striking fact in the bottom left of each leaf, i.e., Pink Fact relates how a single celled algae's pink and red pigments makes lakes turn pink!

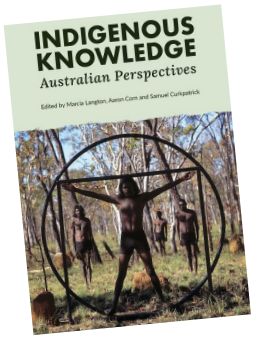
The paragraphing gives the reader time to pause and look at the illustrations to support the text or, for the more engaged, to refer to other keywords of the glossary. Glossary terms are helpfully in bold text to encourage new readers to check these definitions—a good habit which really does need encouraging—and immediately before the Glossary is an intelligent and un-intimidating timeline which will help thoughtful students with the greatest reference shift to grasping geology in my opinion—the lengths of time it covers.

The covers of this volume and its endpapers are also a neat geological contrast. The covers are geology strata in faded, Australian colours; while the endpapers are the compartments of a set of geological samples previewing images which will appear in the Alphabet within.

This book is an inviting beginning for young readers in Australian geology. It could also be used as a set of resources for those of us who have wanted to put more geology in the sprawling geography subject in Australian schools.

It is an attractive and accessible picture book with a strong bedrock and outcroppings of hard science.

Jonathan Sise, Sandringham College
Judith Sise, retired Primary Science Teacher, Victoria



Indigenous knowledge: Australian perspectives.

By Marcia Langton, Aaron Corn, and Samuel Curkpatrick. The Miegunyah Press, 2024,

224 pages, soft cover, ISBN 9780522880755
https://www.mup.com.au/about/miegunyah-press

Indigenous knowledge: Australian perspectives is a valuable addition to any teacher's library and a treasure trove of teaching and learning opportunities. While readers may find familiar topics, such as Indigenous astronomy and on Country learning, these chapters bring the reader up to speed with current research and First Nations perspectives. The book is arranged in sections, covering understandings across Deep Knowledge, Knowledge Expression, Knowledge in Country, and Hearing our Voices.

The content is broad and diverse, with authors privileging First Nations voices and offering insight into the deep connection between land and people. This is explained in detail in the chapter, "Celebrating Galtha Rom workshops, A Yolŋu-led knowledge productions methodology in land and sea management". Beginning in the 1980s, Yolŋu educators and knowledge holders reformed the curriculum with a "both ways" education approach for students, leading to the success of the Learning on Country program and subsequent employment opportunities with First Nations ranger organisations.

With landscape and country in focus, current-day challenges bring together tradition and science with a "both ways" approach. Water tenures and Indigenous fishing cultures of the Top End savannas are celebrated through the rich variety of First Nations' languages and terms that frame water as both a physical and spiritual resource. Models of collaboration and two-way learning are discussed across various areas, including co-designed and co-created knowledge centres that act as a bridge between "old world" Indigenous and "new world" scientific knowledge and understanding. The role of song in both traditional and contemporary settings, encompassing language, knowledge, healing, and well-being, as well as Country as teacher, is explored across the chapters.

The chapter "Deep Water Knowledge" is a fascinating read that explores 29 First Nation histories from around Australia, all of which tell of times when sea levels were lower than they are today. Through a series of case studies, including Lake Carpentaria (now the Gulf of Carpentaria), and when parts of the Great Barrier Reef were scrubland, these events are mapped against postglacial sea-level change.

The authors state in the introduction to this book that these First Nation "traditions carry understandings of ancestral histories of occupation, coastal inundations and other major climate changes, as well as patterns of behaviour for how to live well on country, manage the environment, provide for material needs and maintain a social balance."

This is a must-read for anyone wanting to broaden their understanding of climate change and learn from cultures that have valued this knowledge and passed on these stories of change and survival.

In the final chapter, the work of the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria, which has been advocating in treaty and truth-telling spaces since 2019, highlights the work of the Treaty Authority and the Yoorrook Justice Commission in Victoria.

The authors raise the importance of Australia's First Peoples and their cultural authority, which comes from the land itself. We are reminded of the importance of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and its role in ensuring the recognition and respect that cultural authority requires.

As a professional learning opportunity, this book is ideal for supporting staff in taking on greater responsibility for their own, their school's and their students' cultural responsiveness. There are many examples of First Nations ways of knowing, being, and doing, as well as genuine collaborative practices that incorporate mainstream and Western approaches with ancient traditions and knowledge systems.

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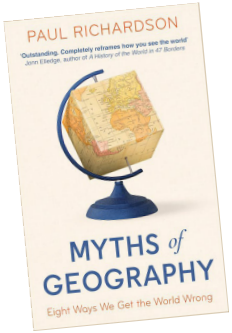
Charles Darwin University, Northern Territory



Myths of geography: Eight ways we get the world wrong.

By Paul Richardson. The Bridge Street Press, 2024,

280 pages, soft cover, ISBN 9780349136325
URL: https://www.littlebrown.co.uk/

The introductory chapter, entitled "Imagined Geographies" subtitled, *Is the world upside down?*, clearly outlines the aims of the book with an outline of each chapter. The author's purpose is to challenge a set of "myths", which he claims are outdated and influence our preconceptions and biases about places and people or our "imagined geographies of the world" which may not mirror realities.

Each myth that is being challenged has its own self-contained chapter with its clearly outlined heading and sub-heading. Each begins with an historical perspective explaining the origins of these myths and the effects they have had and continue to have.

The myths are: Continents, (*How many continents are there?*); Border (*Why walls don't work*); Nation (*What is a country?*); Sovereignty (*Why taking back a country is not what it seems*); Measuring Growth (*Wealth, health or happiness*); Russian Expansion (H*ow Putin unleashed the revanchist monster*); China's New Silk Road (*Why all roads don't lead to China*); and Africa is Doomed to Fail (*Seeing beyond the colonial cliché*).

Topics covered refer to current geopolitical issues including the Russia-Ukraine conflict, the question of nationhood for Palestine, the rise of China, and the Mexico-USA border.

All chapters are self-contained and are not necessarily linked to the rest of the book. The three chapters that I found most interesting and "myth challenging" are considered below.

"Africa is Doomed" encourages a more nuanced perspective on the African continent and illustrates the problems associated with dealing with a place on this scale. As the author notes: "There is a long-standing myth that Africa is both uniform and undeveloped. This myth compresses a gigantic land mass of fifty-four countries with over 1,000 ethnolinguistic groups and a population of 1.3 billion into a neat geographical unit" (p. 188).

"Measuring Growth" explores the limitations of using GDP, a concept that has only been with us since the 1930s, as the only way of measuring and comparing countries, asking why "so much trust has been placed in a number that tells us so little about our wealth, health and wellbeing?" (p. 135) ignoring other aspects of a society including, happiness, life expectancy, education attainment and living standards.

"Continents" outlines the historical roots of establishing the continents, as a way of categorising and classifying the world. The author claims that some of the continental boundaries are arbitrary and should be reconsidered. A limitation the author identifies is "any continental scheme inevitably involves reducing the richness and diversity of the human and natural world to four, or five, six or seven arbitrary and artificial chunks of space that must be filled with content." (p. 41) This is one of the more thought-provoking chapters, but a series of maps would have aided understanding.

I recommend this book for the general reader and as a teacher reference. It is readable, and accessible, and does challenge some of the assumptions and preconceptions that we may have of the world, but more maps, diagrams and charts would have been useful to visually support the vast amounts of information contained.

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More-than-human.

By Jamie Lorimer and Timothy Hodgetts. Routledge, 2024,

262 pages, soft cover, ISBN 9781138058392
https://www.routledge.com/

In the first quarter of this century, more-than-human geographies have experienced an influential period of academic ascendancy. Although they are inspired by diverse intellectual currents from both within geography and elsewhere, they are arguably based on two important ideas: relationality and materialism. The authors, Jamie Lorimer and Timothy Hodgetts, would add a third notion, situated and multiple knowledges (pp. 9–10).

Relational geographies are anti-essentialist. They are concerned with connections, rather than discrete elements. Some connections succeed. Some fail. Relationality has, not only, revivified geographical thinking about space, place, and scale; but also, events, affects, and dwelling; gendered, sexed and racialised bodies; objects, machines and animals. Relational geographies are apparent in Deleuze and Guattari's materialist theories of difference (p. 64) where conjoined bodies of human, non-human and technologies, i.e., rider, horse, and riding technologies, such as the saddle or reins, are entangled together to become a new powerful item: the Mongol Empire (Jones, 2009, p. 315).

Relational geographies are also based on actor-network theories that emerged out of Science and Technology Studies. Actor-network theories also disavow the dualisms in Western thought (pp. 2–3, 23–31) to argue that the world is already part of us, just as we are a part of it, a view that extends the social beyond the human (Whatmore, 2002, p. 118), whereby humans are inevitably ensnared with non-human agents. Such relational geographies are also seen in performative worldviews: where humans and non-humans are caught in the fabric of the world, in its modalities of experience, in its affects, perhaps best seen, for humans, as the "spiritualized pull or uplift of a chord of music, and the stillness struck by the colour

of paint" (Dewsbury et al., 2002, p. 439). Relationality here exceeds mere words. It contests the excessive power granted to language in order to determine what is real.

If relational thinking sturdily buttresses more-than-human geographies, so too does an increased interest in materiality in Geography (pp. 52–81). Materiality ranges over:

- *atmospheric things* (McCormack, 2018) both as the gaseous substance that surrounds the body and the atmosphere of a place, i.e., a friendly atmosphere, a sinister atmosphere, etc. (p. 75);
- body fat in relation to feminism and the intra-active capacities of bodily matter (p. 57), intra-actions that outstrip the cognitive to include sensibilities, emotions and feelings;
- enchantment expressed as wonder, hope, joy and curiosity (p. 153) in relation to everyday objects like metals, plastics, bottle caps and rubbish, a weird world of things that are somehow independent of humans and yet influence intra-actions between humans and non-humans in unpredictable ways;
- the elusive footprints of water voles in a derelict urban wasteland where the "liveliness" of the material world is expressed in yet another guise (pp. 98–99).

Clearly, the compass of materiality far exceeds that of "follow the thing" materialism, that grounded geographical analyses of the concrete world. It is clearly much more than a materiality best seen as the economic foundations of society.

The text features numerous scholars who present innovative multiple worlds of human-geographical concern. What is remarkable about the *More-than-human* text is that it presents such complex scholarship in such straight-forward and understandable terms. The authors even portray one of the more obscure geographic exponents, Nigel Thrift (pp. 59–60, 227–229), in teacher-friendly terms. They introduce the reader to various alternative philosophical positions from the Western canon, from anthropologists that study non-Western people (p. 8), the feminist anthropologist and science studies scholar, Donna Haraway (pp. 55–56) to the Bawaka Collective (pp. 115–117) as well as prominent geographers such as Sarah Whatmore (pp. 218–238 and more numerous entries), Margaret Fitzsimmons (pp. 220–221) and Steve Hinchcliffe (over numerous entries). It is an intertwined world.

Jamie Lorimer, the first author of *More-than-human*, studied at the University of Bristol where Sarah Whatmore taught. Whatmore introduced the term more-than-human life worlds (Whatmore, 2002, p. 162) in her ground-breaking text, *Hybrid geographies*, and referred to more-than-human geography in 2003 (Whatmore, 2003, p. 139). Lorimer's PhD supervisor was Steve Hinchliffe, author of *Geographies of nature* who maintains that that non-humans of all kinds are active and lively partners in the making of our worlds (Hinchliffe, 2007, p. 1).

Sarah Whatmore met up with Margaret Fitzsimmons while on sabbatical leave. Fitzsimmons, the granddaughter of the great US cultural geographer Carl Sauer (p. 220), had written about the materiality of nature as far back as 1989. Sarah Whatmore, Steve Hinchliffe, and Jamie Lorimer are collectively and arguably, the brightest stars in contemporary more-than-human geography.

In the text, following an introductory chapter, Chapter one examines the rise of humanism, debates about critical social theories and develops real-world examples about the crisis in humanism.

Chapter two focuses on more-than-human materialism and is divided into six sections that look at: human bodies (pp. 54–60), animals, plants and other organisms (pp. 60–63), biological processes (pp. 63–69), technologies and infrastructure (pp. 69–73), the elements: earth, fire, air and water (pp. 73–77), and, key characteristics of more-than-human materialisms (pp. 77–80).

Chapter three is titled *more-than-human knowledge practices.* It features intriguing boxes titled*:* learning to be affected by wild things (pp. 98–99), digital ecologies (pp. 105–106), wild experiences at the OVP (pp. 110–111), and the Bawaka Collective incorporating "both ways of learning" (pp. 115–117).

Chapter four, titled *more-than-human politics and ethics,* examines what happens when politics and ethics are shared across the entire more-than-human field. Politics, in this chapter, refers to relations between humans and a subset of animals that are raised to quasi-human status. Ethics here involves claims over what should be done to people, animals and nature, in "a world increasingly populated by human artefacts, technologies and socio-materialities" (Roe, 2010, p. 262). The most interesting sections involve the views of Public Engagement in Science and Technology (PEST) (pp. 145–148), political animal (pp. 149–152), and the inhumanities (pp. 160–162).

Chapter five is titled, *the tensions within and prospects for more-than-humanism*, and principally argues for and against the proposition that the role of the passive human subject fades too much in this more-than-human world. An appendix provides an illuminating interview with fellow Oxford scholar, Dame Sarah Whatmore.

Why teach more-than-human geographies in an Australian classroom? Firstly, it attempts to unite human, physical and environmental geography, (Castree, 2005, Fitzsimmons, [1989], 1997), in a world seen as "neither separate from us, nor veiled and inaccessible" (Braun, 2005, p. 837). This approach attempts to unite "the bio (life) and the geo (earth)" (Whatmore, 2006, p. 600), or "bodies (including human bodies) and (geo-physical worlds)" (p. 603). There is a refreshing intent to move beyond the humanist dualism of people and nature in Geography, rather the human should be seen as but one life form among many, i.e., existing in a multinatural world (pp. 12–13).

This intent is reflected in the Australian Curriculum: Geography by the concept *interconnection.* The text is pedagogically sound, usefully building on foundational concepts such as *material agency*, *situated and multiple knowledges,* and *relations and processes* (pp. 9–10); then reiterating these ideas in more and more depth before revisiting them in the conclusion to chapter 5 (pp. 205–207). The emphasis on multiple knowledges encourages students to present

their points of view, to mix "wild imaginings with routine inventiveness" (Whatmore, 2004, p. 1360), to slow down expert reasoning and redistribute expertise (p. 114).

The text is both clearly written and approachable, but more importantly, it tells many stories: the very lifeblood of teacher survival in the geography classroom. The text provides answers to many questions that enterprising geography students should be free to ask about, say, the legal personality conferred on a river (pp. 3–4), zoonotic diseases such avian flu, campylobacter and antimicrobial resistance (pp. 185–186) and animals sharing with people suggestions of cognition, sentience, language and tool-use (p. 61).

Further, more-than-human thinking has been endorsed by a number of Australian academic geographers. Kay Anderson (2014, p. 4), from Western Sydney University, has challenged the notion that human culture can be conceived as separate from a nonhuman domain; Lesley Head (2016, p. 56), from the University of Melbourne, declared that members of the "human sciences are now considering the non-human world more systematically"; Neil Argent (2009, p. 308), from the University of New England, acknowledged recent moves towards "the ever-present mingling of the human and the natural"; and, the group of Indigenous elders together with human geographers, from the University of Newcastle and Macquarie University, referred to as the "Bawaka Collective", presented a "participatory approach to the co-production of knowledge" (p. 115).

More-than-human is an important text that refers to more-than-human geographies, more-than humanism and more-than humanists (p. 8). Highly recommended.

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Retelling Australia's water story.

By Quentin Grafton. Monash University Publishing, 2024,

96 pages, soft cover, ISBN 9781922979902 https://publishing.monash.edu/

This very brief tome takes umbrage at the story, widely accepted, of the heroic taming of Australia's wild and unfamiliar water resources by an invasion of those more familiar with a regime of water that was always "at hand" and "plentiful".

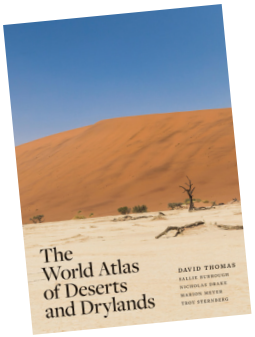
This retelling by Quentin Grafton tells a vastly different story as he examines the water situation for the continent of Australia as one of scarcity; of exploitation and lack of understanding, as well as an arrogance that prevented the "white" invaders having a humility that would allow them to learn from those with a millennium of lived experience as to the real nature of Australia's water budget; a budget that frequently leaves one high and very dry.

Quentin uses a series of pointed headings that demand closer reading. Such an "awakening" of clarions include: "too little", "too late", "too dirty", "not at hand", "unreliable"—and "whose water is it, anyway".

The great dispossession of neglect, a future that is imperfect demands a response; a "wake-up" call (or shout) based on humility and partnership that utilises an openness to learning, with respectfulness in partnership gaining knowledge gathered through millennia, creating new and ongoing partnerships across the long divide to a place of mutual respect that leads

on to a vision for water on this continent that is underpinned by this knowledge leading to a vision for water that is Australian of and for all.

Les Mullins
Surrey Hills, Victoria



The world atlas of deserts and drylands.

Edited by David Thomas. Contributions by Nicholas Drake, Troy Sternberg, Sallie Burrough, and Marion Meyer. Princeton University Press, 2025, hardcover,

400 pages, ISBN 9780691251974 https://press.princeton.edu/

I was thrilled to learn of the recent publication of this atlas and reference on deserts and drylands, written by some of the most prominent academic authorities on arid zone landscapes, landforms, societies, and plants.

Deserts and drylands are important: they comprise 40% of Earth's land surface; host more than a quarter of the world's people; their beauty and harsh extremes inspire metaphors, myths and literature.

Human land use and climate change are increasingly degrading and expanding these regions, adding imperative for more of us to better understand their geography. Yet surprisingly few plain language, global scale treatises on drylands have been compiled; still fewer integrate state-of-the-art scientific knowledge with attractive imagery. As such, this 400-page book occupies a strategic niche for those interested in the world around us.

The book explores a wide range of themes relating to dryland geography. It is divided into 10 chapters following a short introduction to the significance of deserts and drylands. The first chapter explores what makes a desert and the challenges inherent in defining one. I was happy to see the inclusion of the term *drylands* in this volume, in recognition of the complexity and diversity of arid regions. The second chapter provides a comprehensive overview of dryland physical geography and distribution with respect to global climate. The history of desert cartography is described in the third chapter, from 9000-year-old stone maps (kites) in Arabia through to state-of-the-art remotely-sensed datasets. Chapter four presents fascinating short case studies on dryland dynamics, from fossilised desert sediments in Scotland to Martian craters. The next four chapters explore processes and ecology in subtropical, continental, rain-shadow and ocean-margin contexts respectively. The book concludes with two chapters with a human geography emphasis. The anthropogenic influence chapter, while understandably focusing on 20th century impacts such as the Aral Sea disaster and North American dust bowl, also describes alteration over millennial timescales. The desert futures chapter discusses methods of predicting climate and dryland response, and provides case studies of natural adaptation and technological mitigation.

The book achieves an admirable coverage of dryland geography. Recent years have seen substantial advances in scientific techniques for investigating deserts and improvements in our understanding of their complexity; these developments are nicely communicated. As an Australian-based geographer, it would perhaps have been nice to see more attention paid to our continent; the book places more emphasis on the African deserts overall, which likely reflects the expertise of the authors. The book does end rather abruptly; a short concluding synthesis might have been helpful.

This book is a highly useful resource, accessibly pitched at secondary school level, and could equally be used as a teacher resource as well as in the classroom by students. The book could readily be adapted for use at all secondary school levels: applications could include early secondary explorations of global dryland distribution; middle secondary investigations of case studies of interesting landform types or floral/faunal adaptations; and senior year interrogations of the climate mechanisms causing aridity or the impact of human land use and future climate change.

The book may be purchased through a range of booksellers for less (on some platforms, for much less) than $100. I believe it offers excellent value for money and the authors are to be commended for communicating sophisticated scientific concepts in an accessible way. Moreover, the presentation is sumptuous and would not look out of place on a coffee table—which could tempt a still wider readership, which would be a great thing for both dryland environments and Geography overall!

I highly recommend this book to geographers, teachers and students, and the wider public interested in the natural world.

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