

Gaelic Place Names: 'Sìth' and 'Sìthean'

By Alison Grant

The Gaelic word *sìth* or *sìdh* (pronounced *shee*) can mean fairy and hill and in Scottish place-names is used in a wide variety of contexts.

It is therefore no surprise that the Scottish countryside is punctuated with hills named simply *Sìthean* fairy hill or *An Sìdhean* the fairy hill . There also many names containing *sìthean* as their generic or defining element, including *Sìthean Mòr* big fairy hill on the island of Handa, *Sìdhean Dubh* black fairy hill on the isle of Skye, *Sìdhean Sluaigh* fairy hill of the host in Argyll, *Sìdhean an Airgid*