



GLOSSARY OF  
ASSOCIATED  
CORNISH WORDS

Some Cornish language and dialect words relating to hedges, their function & wildlife. Written Cornish is derived from many old documents with a variety of spellings, not all being shown. Dialect words derived from English are shown *Eng.*

Main source:

*Gerlyver Noweth*

*Kernewek-Sawsnek Ha*

*Sawsnek-Kernewek (A  
New Cornish Dictionary)*

by R. Morton Nance pub.  
Dyllansow Truran 1990.

**A**

agroas = rose-hips  
aiglet = haw-berry  
anaf = slow worm  
aras = to plough (*aras en  
kensa an todn* = to plough  
first the ley)  
ascallan = thistle  
azan = barrel-stave, rib  
adgy = a gap, esp. a gap in  
a hedge  
atal = mine rubbish, refuse  
or waste.  
avallom = apple tree

awhesyth = skylark

**B**

bagas eithin = furze bush  
barr = bolt, bar  
bagaroot = turnip *Eng.*  
bah = gate hinge  
bal = a mine  
banal = broom plants  
baren = small branch  
barges = buzzard  
barles, barlez = barley  
bedewen = birch tree  
bethan = meadow  
beorth = cattle enclosure  
bownans = lifetime (yn ow  
bewanas = as long as I  
live)  
bigal = cowman  
bilders = water dropwort,  
hemlock  
bledgan = a flower  
blowth = blossom  
bod an ethen = sparrow  
hawk  
bool = an axe, hatchet  
bowlan = cattle pound  
bolt = a stone-built drain  
*Eng.*  
bothen = corn marigold  
*Eng.*  
bottoms = a narrow  
uncultivated valley floor  
(Cornish *straze*) *Eng.*  
bounder = lane leading  
from the homestead to  
pasture *Eng.*  
bran = a crow  
breach = heathy ground on  
which the turf has been  
cut and burnt *Eng.*  
breath = herd grazing  
common land  
breilu = primrose(s)  
brogh = a badger  
brows, bruss = broken  
wood fuel, small fragments  
britton = thrift, sea pink

budnan = meadow

beuh = cow

bulas = hemlock

bullum = fruit of the  
bullace tree *Eng.*

burn = a load, as much  
turf, furze, straw, hay &c  
as one can carry *Eng.*

buorth = land manured by  
enclosing animals on it at  
night

**C**

kalx = lime

cammik = rest-harrow

carneth = heap of rocks

casting up = replacing soil  
run or fallen off a hedge  
*Eng.*

cadgwith = thicket

chawk = jackdaw

chikkiar eithen = furze  
chat, stonechat

clos, cluit = hurdle, gap in  
hedge

clugyar = partridge

cluit = a wattled gate, gap  
in hedge

cockedge = a trimmed  
thorn hedge (also used for  
drying clothes) *Eng.*

coffen, coffin, cofan = tin  
quarry, open to grass.

cogegoes = green  
woodpecker

colmy = to bind

cumpas = level, straight

conen = rabbits

core, coor = eight hours  
work.

corlan = sheep pen

cos, coose = a wood

cothan = bedrock

country = the ground itself,  
especially used of that  
about or near an  
excavation *Eng.*

cank = dog rose

clicket = gate fastener  
clidga = muddy area  
around gateway &c.  
colan = pigeon or dove  
collan = hazel tree  
cran = bracken, scrub (cf.  
reden)  
creeb, criban = roof ridge,  
top of hedge  
creen = readily split stone,  
brittle  
crellas = ancient ruined  
hut, excavation in a hedge  
roofed over for shelter  
cricken (cricks, crinnicks)  
= dry sticks for kindling  
croft = uncultivated  
enclosed land esp. for  
growing furze  
crokkan = a snare for  
rabbit and hare  
crobman = reaphook,  
sickle  
cronag du = toad  
cronag mellin = frog  
crow = hut, hovel, or sty  
cue = ox shoe  
cuntl, terry = to pick or  
pluck  
cunys, kinnis = fuel,  
firewood  
cutting and casting up =  
repairing turf hedge *Eng.*

## D

da = fallow deer  
dar = oak tree (also  
glastan)  
dash (tash, tosh) =  
unbound faggot of furze  
dashed, dysel = sow thistle  
davas = sheep  
denewes = young ox or  
heifer  
devith = uncultivated  
waste land  
dowrak = soggy  
deyl = leaves

doer = earth, soil, ground  
doerhok = nightjar  
dowran = watering place  
durgy = otter  
dralyer = trailing stem of  
plant eg bramble (extended  
to follower, sweetheart)  
dreth = sand, gravel  
dreas = arable crop  
dreave = barren, empty (as  
a nut without a kernel)  
drez an vledhan = all the  
year round  
dreyn, drannack, yrynen =  
blackthorn bushes (cf.  
spenn = hawthorn)  
dreynek = thorn thicket  
dreys = brambles  
drim = ridge  
drok-dewedha = to come to  
a bad end  
durn = side post of a door  
or gate.  
dygea = to unenclose,  
unfence

## E

edil = plough handle  
egr diu = daisy  
ehal = draught animal  
eithen = furze, gorse  
elaw = elm trees  
enlidan, ledanen = plantain  
ent = to empty out, rain  
heavily. "Es enten down"  
*Eng.*  
ervinan = turnip  
ethen = birds  
ewder = straightness

## F

falh = scythe  
falky = ready for mowing  
fave = bean  
fow, vow = badger or fox  
hole  
felga = ready to split  
fellon = hawkweed

fenton = natural spring  
ferdhyn-tyr = land-farthing  
(quarter of Cornish acre)  
fern = bracken especially  
after cutting and stacking  
*Eng.*  
foar = drill, furrow  
vor = road  
fôs = a wall (cf. kee = a  
hedge)  
fradge = to mend a gap in a  
hedge  
freath = gap in, or a,  
wattled hedge.  
frith = quickthorn hedge

## G

gadga = daisy  
gadja-vrawz = oxeye daisy  
gahen = henbane  
gar = a stem  
garth = small enclosure  
gaver = goat  
geler = coffin  
gew, kew = best field on  
the farm (prob. nearest and  
oldest field)  
giririk = partridge  
gladdy = yellow hammer  
glastanen = holm oak  
(Ilex)  
gleth = chickweed  
glastan = oak tree (see also  
dar)  
glaswedhen = sapling  
glaw = rain  
glawgy = shelter  
glaws (gloas, gloz) = dry  
cow dung used as fuel  
glit = hoar frost  
glosen = dried cow-dung  
fuel  
glowwyth = trees for  
charcoal  
gluth = dew  
godegh = lurking-place,  
cover for wildlife  
godror = small homestead

gulran-gea = hedge-sparrow  
goon = undivided moorland part of a farm or parish.  
goon = flatish downland, unenclosed pasture, usually shared between farms  
gord (goad) = 9ft rod for cattle, used for measuring a "lace", 39 sq yards. ? perch of land *Eng.*  
gorra, foen = hay  
gothal = watery scrub, willow carr  
gothfys = honeysuckle, woodbine  
gouwan = moth  
goyf = the winter  
gre = a herd  
greet = dry earth.  
grelin = horse/cattle pond  
grend (grin, gren) = rabbit snare, a loop in a chain (? crokkan ?)  
gribble = a rooted cutting of a plant  
gridge = a small fragment of a stone *Eng.*  
griggan = grasshopper  
griglan = heathland, bushy heather.  
grip = ditch along the foot of a hedge *Eng.*  
growan = decomposed granite, often used as core for hedges.  
grig = heather  
groundya = to lay foundations, grounders  
guarrak = cattle  
gucu = bluebell (Camborne/Redruth) *Eng.*  
gueal = enclosed field (usually arable), sometimes in multiple occupation by villagers.

guennol = swallow  
guhien = wasp  
guradnan = wren  
gurgy (gurgo, gorge, gurgow, gurgoe &c) = ancient low hedge, usually pre-Mediaeval & broken-down; also ancient low hedges (usually both sides of an old lane)  
guern = swamp with alders  
guersyn = spindle  
guhyen = apple bee, wasp  
gurthyd = ox-goad  
guersyn = wind  
gwage = uninhabited, empty  
gwandra = to ramble, stroll, wander  
gwnath = wheat  
gweal = arable land  
guedhan = a tree  
guedhan-knufan = hazel-bush  
gwetnak = tree-grown place, full of trees  
gweel kea = to build a hedge  
gwelz = the grass  
gwenan = bee  
gweras = ground, soil, earth, mould  
gwarnik = marshy, swampy  
gwernam = alder-trees  
gwythrose = honeysuckle  
gwradnan = wren  
gwrythya = to take root  
gwiban = fly  
gwybesen = gnat, midge, mosquito  
guilkin = frog  
gweeth = wood, grove  
gwescas = covering, coating, layer

**H**  
have = summer

hager gowas = cloudburst  
hagglan, haggles = haws  
hained up = to shut off a field for hay, also ground preserved by tin bounds *Eng.*  
hale = moor (as in mire)  
hare = honeysuckle  
haze = seed  
haza = to set seed  
havrak = land tilled for fallow  
heap = turnip  
heblyth = pliant, flexible  
helagon = willow, sallow  
hendra = original or winter homestead  
henvor = abandoned road  
heskan = sedge bog  
heth = stag  
hewas = summer dairy farm  
holm-scratch = missel thrush *Eng.*  
hogan = haw  
hoh = sow (pig)  
  
hoppes = hops

**I**  
igotty = keeper for gate fastener  
ivre, eaver = darnel

**K**  
kea = hedge bank (*in neb toll kea* = in some hole of a hedge)  
keas = to hedge, fence, enclose  
keggas = Alexanders, hemlock, or similar  
keleren = pig-nut, earth-nut  
kelleel = plough stick, coulter  
kelly, killy = small wood  
kelinan = holly tree  
kenidgak = place for

getting fuel  
kennegan = marsh or bog  
kentra = to spike, fix with one nail  
kerdhynen = mountain ash, rowan  
kerh = oats  
kerth = property (as of right)  
kees = hedged, closed  
kekezna = Cornish heath  
kezan = turf or peat cut for fuel  
kevelak = woodcock  
keverang = hundred of county  
kew = enclosure, close, field  
kewny = moss, lichen &c.  
kevar = land ploughed jointly  
kib a gap = to mend a hedge with thorns, and put tabs or turves to keep them down.  
kibbed = fenced off with bushes, furze, &c.  
kilvin = plough tail  
killas = clayey slate  
kinnis = fuel for fire esp. turf, furze & scrub. Not wood or coal  
kyfor = hollow way

## L

lace, les = landyard of 18 feet square ?perch  
lastethes = filth, vermin, weeds &c.  
launder, londer = gutter  
leasing = picking stones  
lehan = flag-stone  
lem = to strip *Eng.*  
leaz = breadth  
lesdushak = betony  
leskes = burnt  
laister = yellow flag  
lidn = pond

logas = mice  
lobm = bare, naked  
ludnu = cattle  
lokles = mugwort  
lowarth = garden  
lowarn = fox  
loog = undergrowth of weed, clover, &c. among corn  
lidziw = ashes  
linas = nettles  
lene = stitch, strip of land, often part of field in multiple occupation  
lis- = former admin. centre, manorial court  
lubbas, lobmas = unproductive ground  
luzu = vegetation, weeds  
luzumoh = hogweed

## M

madere = groundsel  
maglen = a trap, gin  
maggy-uler = the goat moth  
maruran = raven  
margh = a horse  
maun, maud, gurry = large wicker basket *Eng.*  
meader = field or harvest mouse  
meat-earth = soil suitable for arable cropping *Eng.*  
meaz = large open field  
melwhen = snail, slug  
melenek = goldfinch  
meilhionan = clover  
melyn = a mill  
mean-lear = foundation stone, grounder  
merrian = ants  
mill = poppy  
minfel = yarrow  
mola = thrush  
molgh dhu = blackbird  
moorstone = granite rocks or boulders, "scattered over

our hills". Now used of granite from any source  
*Eng.*  
mot = tree-root *Eng.*  
mow = what is mown, small rick  
mungern = horse-collar

## N

noswyth = in the night  
nyth = bird's nest

## O

odgon, ohan = oxen  
onnen = ash tree  
orgal = woundwort  
out-of-core = out of regular working hours *Eng.*  
owna = to make right, to mend  
oye = egg

## P

pagespaw = lizard  
pal, ref = shovel  
parah, tonak = herd or flock  
park = enclosed field, sometimes pasture  
pedripromter = knapweed (lit. priest's heads)  
pednan = small pieces of turf.  
pedrevan = newt  
pednan = tadpole  
peeth = dug well (cf. fenton)  
penedna = broken tops of furze  
pezzack = a rotten pichard, broken fish not for salting  
plansa = to plant  
plaow = pests  
pleau = parish  
podar = rotten, decayed  
popdock, bochgoch = foxglove  
porfel = pasture, grazing

place  
poth = burnt, scorched  
pow = countryside  
pras, praze = meadow,  
pasture, small grazing  
prill = small solid eg  
sheep-dropping, stone  
chip.  
prill = small solid eg  
sheep-dropping, stone  
chip.  
predn = timber tree  
pry = clay-earth, cob  
preve = 'creepy-crawlie'  
pillas = naked oats (*Avena  
nuda*)  
pigol = hoe, mattock, pick  
axe

## Q

quithias = herdsman

## R

radgel = ground covered  
with loose rocks, fox's  
earth  
ramsan, ransy = wild garlic  
recam = grassy side of a  
hedge  
redan = bracken  
reeze = for grain to shed  
out of ear  
ros = heathland hill slope  
or spur (cf. goon)  
ruddock = robin  
ryp = beside

## S

saw = backload, horseload  
sawan davas = sheep  
creep-hole in hedge  
saime = pilchard oil, train  
oil  
scavaligian = wild arum  
scanarnak = hare  
scaw-dower = figwort,  
kennel wort  
sawan = elder tree

scaw-dhu = hemp  
agrimony  
scollok = refuse of a slate  
quarry  
scoran = bough  
screech = a short sudden  
blaze.  
sentry = glebe land  
set = a lease  
sharaliggo = lizard  
shiver = a bar of a gate  
*Eng.*  
sichor = a dryness,  
drought  
seavy = strawberry  
skeddrak = broken or  
dilapidated  
skedge, sherrish = privet  
skeet = squall  
skew, skiff = driving mist  
or drizzle  
soch = ploughshare  
sorn = nook, cranny  
sour-sops = common sorrel  
*Eng.*  
sowle = arish, stubble  
spern = hawthorn  
spernek = thorn copse  
spethas = brambles  
splat = a piece of ground  
stent = rubble left by tin  
streamers in their  
workings.  
stroil = couch-grass  
strother = pack-saddle  
shewollok = fieldfare (the  
sly one)  
sprowse = light hay crop  
from pasture  
summering = farmstock  
sent on to moors for whole  
summer *Eng.*  
sumper = downpour

## T

taler = headland of  
ploughed field, or end of  
tillage

tam = short furze  
tash = a pile of furze,  
briars &c. at one cutting &  
removal  
tavol = dock  
teel = to cultivate and sow  
ground *Eng.*  
teke = shrew  
tevy = to grow  
tiching = setting up turves  
to dry, to prepare for fuel  
*Eng.*  
tigry = kestrel  
tink = chaffinch  
tinner, dishwasher = pied  
wagtail *Eng.*  
tommy-tailor = the  
crane-fly *Eng.*  
toll-ke = ditch beside a  
hedge  
todn = arable grass  
ploughed in rotation (aras  
an kensa an todn = plow  
first the ley)  
towargh, toor = light turfy  
soil for burning  
towan = sand dune, or land  
derived therefrom  
trap = stile  
tre, tref = farming hamlet,  
mostly post-Roman & pre-  
Norman  
treveglos = village (lit.  
churchtown)  
trimtram = sheep trap or  
cattle grid  
trone = a furrow, lynchet  
trodgan = starling  
trulerch = footpath  
tubban, tab, tob = a turf  
tyak = farmer, manager,  
householder  
tikki-dui = butterfly

## U

ula = owl  
urts = *Eng.* wortleberry

## V

vady = damp  
visgay, visgie = a kind of  
mattock/hammer for  
hedging  
vorver = way cleared  
around crops to ease  
access, bridle-path  
voulz = hedging bill

## W

wastrel = uncultivated  
land, unused *Eng.*  
want = mole *Eng.*  
weeth = a field  
weggas = bindweed  
wheal = mine-work  
whil = beetle  
winnard = redwing ("As  
whisht as a winnard")  
*Eng.*

## Y

yar = hen  
yeat = a gate  
yorth = roe deer

## Z

zart = hedgehog  
zewl = skimming plough  
for removing turf

## Some relevant sayings

Cows nebas, cows da  
Speak little, speak well.

Nyn ges gûn heb legas, na  
kei heb scovern  
There is no down without  
an eye, nor hedge without  
ears.

Guel yw guetha vel goosen  
It is better to keep than to  
beg

Neb na gare y gwyantoll  
restouas  
He that heeds not gain,  
must expect loss.

Nrb ns gare y gy, an gwra  
deveeder  
He that regards not his  
dog, will make him a  
sheep-killer

Gura da, rag ta honan te yn  
gura  
Do good; for thyself thou  
doest it.

Me an' pref guyr a gousaf,  
Kyns ys dybarth.  
I will prove it true what I  
say,  
Before we separate.

En hav perkou gwâv  
In summer remember  
winter.

Elo why clapier Kernuack  
Can you speak Cornish?

An laver kôth yn laver gûr.  
What's said of old is said  
in truth.