

Bushcraft

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Bushcraft is a popular term for wilderness survival skills. The term was popularized in the Southern Hemisphere by Les Hiddins (the Bush Tucker Man) as well as in the Northern Hemisphere by Mors Kochanski and recently gained considerable currency in the United Kingdom due to the popularity of Ray Mears and his bushcraft and survival television programs. It is also becoming popular in urban areas where the average person is separated from nature, as a way to get back in tune with their rural roots. The phrase bushcraft's origin is from skills used in the bush country of Australia. Often the phrase 'wilderness skills' is used as it describes skills used all over the world.



Knives, saws and axes are all popular bushcraft tools

Bushcraft is about thriving in the natural environment, and the acquisition of the skills and knowledge to do so. Bushcraft skills include firecraft, tracking, hunting, fishing, shelter-building, navigation by natural means, the use of tools such as knives and axes, foraging, water sourcing, hand-carving wood, container construction from natural materials, and rope and twine-making, among others.

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Etymology

The *Oxford English Dictionary* definition of bushcraft is "skill in matters pertaining to life in the bush".

The word has been used in its current sense in Australia and South Africa at least as far back as the 1800s. Bush in this sense is probably a direct adoption of the Dutch 'bosch', (now 'bos') originally used in Dutch colonies for woodland and country covered with natural wood, but extended to usage in British colonies, applied to the uncleared or un-farmed districts, still in a state of nature. Later this was used by extension for the country as opposed to the town. In Southern Africa, we get Bushman



Miniature bowdrill kit

from the Dutch 'boschjesman' applied by the Dutch colonists to the natives living in the bush. In North America (where there was also considerable colonisation by the Dutch) you have the word 'bushwacker' which is close to the Dutch 'bosch-wachter' (now 'boswachter') meaning 'forest-keeper' or 'forest ranger'.

Historically, the term has been spotted in the following books (amongst others):

- *The History of Australian Exploration from 1788 to 1888* by Ernest Favenc; published in 1888.
- *My Brilliant Career* by Miles Franklin; published in 1901.
- *Campaign Pictures of the War in South Africa (1899–1900)* by A. G. Hales; published in 1901.
- *The Explorers of Australia and their Life-work* by Ernest Favenc; published in 1908.
- *We of the Never-Never* by Jeannie Gunn; published in 1908.
- *The Life of Captain Matthew Flinders* by Ernest Scott; published in 1914.

Trademark

The word bushcraft was trademarked by Bushcraft USA LLC. The application was submitted July 30, 2012 and issued November 12, 2013.^[1] This trademark is a service mark, for the general use of the word bushcraft and is not limited to electronic forms of communication or commerce. However, the validity of this TM is in question since the Mark was used in commerce, see Mors Kochanski, in 1988, 24 years prior to Bushcraft USA making claim to the Mark.

Promoters

The Irish-born Australian writer Richard Graves titled his outdoor manuals "The 10 bushcraft books".^[2]

Canadian wilderness instructor Mors Kochanski published the "Northern Bushcraft" book (later retitled "Bushcraft") in 1988. He has^[3] stated on numerous occasions that book title was an explicit reference to Graves' work.^[4]

The term has enjoyed a recent popularity largely thanks to Ray Mears, Cody Lundin, Les Stroud, Dave Canterbury, and their television programs.

See also

- Batoning
- Scoutcraft
- Woodcraft
- Bradford Angier
- Cody Lundin
- Dave Canterbury
- Dick Proenneke
- Jamie Maslin
- Les Stroud
- Lofty Wiseman
- Mors Kochanski
- Matt Graham
- Ray Mears
- Bear Grylls

References

1. <http://tmsearch.uspto.gov/bin/showfield?f=doc&state=4807:m7wq3r.2.3>
2. An on-line edition of 'The 10 Bushcraft Books' by Richard Graves <http://chrismolloy.com/page.php?u=p131>
3. Kochanski's webpage "Archived copy". Archived from the original on 2012-12-23. Retrieved 2012-11-07.
4. Mors Kochanski Interview, Equip 2 Endure Podcast www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bd_s3xMUAAA

External links

 The dictionary definition of bushcraft at Wiktionary  Media related to Bushcraft at Wikimedia Commons

- Survival and Primitive Technology (https://www.dmoz.org/Recreation/Outdoors/Survival_and_Primitive_Technology/) at DMOZ
- Native Bushcraft and Medical Plants, Peru (https://web.archive.org/web/20140720144216/http://paytiti.org/selva-tours/english-_jungle-tours/)

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Categories: Survival skills | Primitive technology

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