Bogey — **noun** a swim or bathe; a bath. **verb** to swim; to bathe.

---

**February 2010**

---

*Oxford Australia Word of the Month*

**Why have I received Oxford Australia Word of the Month?**

You are receiving this email because you are a valued customer of Oxford University Press. You can unsubscribe at any time by sending an email to `wordofthemonth.au@oup.com` with ‘Unsubscribe WOTM’ in the subject line.

**How do I subscribe?**

If you have a colleague or a friend who you think would like to receive Oxford Australia Word of the Month, all they need to do is email `wordofthemonth.au@oup.com` with ‘Subscribe WOTM’ in the subject line.

**Where can I learn more about the Australian National Dictionary Centre?**


**Where can I learn more about Oxford University Press?**


---

**Australian Concise Oxford Dictionary 5th edition**
In her 1996 novel *A Bunch of Strays*, Marie Mahood writes: ‘It’ll do for yer bathroom fer the time bein’, he said. ‘Yer can stick the hose in at the side and syphon the water when yer want a *bogey*. How many Australians still know the word *bogey*?

If we move back to 1946 and Frank Dalby Davison’s novel *Dusty*, about a sheep dog, *bogey* appears again: ‘Except that he was dusty from a day’s work—and a shake and a *bogey* would remove that—he was dusty in name only.’ In both cases, *bogey* appears to mean ‘a wash’.

In 1955 H.G. Lamond in *Towser* writes: ‘We’ll go down to the water-hole and have a *bogey*. In 1999 L. Wallace in *Dad and Joey in Possum Gully* writes: Mum followed Mavis and Bobby to the river for a *bogey*. Here, a *bogey* is ‘a swim’.

*Bogey* was one of the very early borrowings into Australian English from the Aboriginal language spoken in the Sydney area. It was initially borrowed as a verb, which is highly unusual, since almost all the words that were taken from Aboriginal languages were nouns. In the early years it was largely used in nineteenth-century Australian pidgin English, but it then became part of standard Australian English.

A number of beaches that had rock pools that were used for swimming named these pools *bogey holes*, and it is probably in such place names (as in Newcastle in New South Wales) that the word *bogey* lives on. For example, in December 2009 the *Newcastle Herald* reported: ‘A controversial plan to close the historic *Bogey Hole* to the public has met with condemnation from regular users, Hunter residents, politicians and the National Trust.’ Outside of place names, the word *bogey* will sometimes be heard in country Australia. But it is a word that is doomed to archaism.