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RESEARCH ARTICLE



## WalkingScapes as ecopedagogy

Genevieve Blades 

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### ABSTRACT

This study of ecologically lived experience focuses on walking as a sensory, embodied practice with/in Nature and extends the emergent conceptual and empirical literature on ecopedagogy as/in scapes. The scope is outdoor environmental education in Australia, where walking is practiced as bushwalking in relatively natural environments. This cultural construct of bushwalking is problematic due to the standardized and instrumentalized logics of practice. The embodied ecopedagogical qualities and characteristics are under researched and get lost in the commodified bush. Two purposes are examined. One, to presence the felt and affective dimensions of environmental learning. Second, to contribute to the existing practice theorization of ecopedagogy as/in scapes, both of which advance the field of outdoor and environmental education and their research. In this first person study, two cases are presented and inductively interpreted as a grounded theorization of walkingScapes as ecopedagogy.

### KEYWORDS

ecophenomenology;  
embodiment;  
environmental education  
research; outdoor  
education; walking

### Introduction

Walking experiences have richly bodied grounds for enlivening ecopedagogical practices and environmental curriculum inquiry as embodied movement(s) of inter/intractions with Nature's environments.<sup>1</sup> For instance, meandering along a beach or walking along a winding concrete path in urban parkland, are 'ontologically basic intra/interactive moment(s)' (Payne, 2020, p. 133) ((s) *my inclusion*). Educationally, these moments 'can be framed practically as an intercorporeal form of holistic, transdisciplinary, experiential learning, experiential education, and ecological methodology' (Payne, p. 133). This article examines the nature of these 'moments' *via* first person embodied walking experiences of the author as researcher and researched with/in scapes of Nature that are drawn from her autophenomenographic PhD study (Blades, 2020).

My love of walking with/in Nature and sharing 'moving' experiences with others has been part of my personal and professional life for over three decades. I have 'lead' groups of school and tertiary students on bushwalks<sup>2</sup> in diverse Australian landscapes as part of outdoor (OEd) and environmental education (EEd) practice and curriculum. However, dominating the OEd landscape has been the overtly masculinized logics of practice (Gray, 2016; Kennedy & Russell, 2021) evident in the commodification and credentialism of what normatively is referred to as an 'industry.' Kennedy and Russell interrogate the overt presence of 'hegemonic masculinities' as evidenced by 'increasing accounts of sexism and heterosexism in the field,' both OEd and EEd (p. 8). As a female academic and educator with white settler ancestry, critically reflecting upon these walking experiences and my position within them, I think about how I 'do' bushwalking as an educational practice that is historically and culturally entwined in settler colonialism and patriarchy. I wonder whose land I am walking on, what is felt whilst walking and what ethical responses arise? These personal and professional tensions and questions are pivotal to the rationale for this study of walking and, more broadly, the belated need to 'ecopolitically' deconstruct the conventional authority of bushwalking in OEd practice.

The ‘nature’ of walking in Nature<sup>3</sup> has received minimal attention in OEd and EEd research and as they are practiced educationally in schools, clubs and, even, university field trips. Therefore, this article aims to present deeper and richer grounds of the nature of walking with/in scapes of Nature as an enlivened ecopedagogical experience. In doing so, a related key purpose is to advance the intercorporeal insights and interdisciplinary theorization of ‘ecopedagogy as/in scapes’, assembled by Payne (2018a) and seven invited scholars in a Special Issue of *The Journal of Environmental Education*.

This article begins with a brief introduction to the context of bushwalking as practiced in Australian OEd noting some problematic absences and gaps in environmental pedagogy. An overview of scholarship relevant to sensory, embodied walking and movement follows that highlights the ontological, epistemological, and methodological approaches adopted in this study. As this article’s focus is on ecopedagogy, a brief background to this emerging field is discussed and more specifically the nascent research of ‘ecopedagogy as/in scapes’ (Payne, 2018a). A methodological overview follows to explain how the phenomena in question are ‘accessed’ in this study via key methodological ‘waypoints.’ To help the reader ‘live’ representationally in this short text, selected samples from two cases of this study are included to illustrate the inductive nature of the research. From each of these cases, the empirically derived ‘findings’ are re-assembled as an inductively grounded ‘practice theorization’ as to what constitutes an ecopedagogical form and style of walking as embodied movements as/in scapes of Nature. The article will conclude with a discussion of how a) this study confirms the emergent empirical-conceptual ‘body’ of evidence about ecopedagogy with/in the material turn to practice theory in OEd and EEd and, b) extends the ecopedagogical scape and scoped ‘body’ *via* some of the key findings.

## Environmental pedagogy: Absences and gaps in (bush)walking

As part of the traditional ‘schooling’ of outdoor experiences in OEd in Australia, prioritizing performative conventions of competencies, such as the mastery of skills and physical capabilities (Lugg, 2018; Newbury, 2003) and the subsequent absence of an environmental pedagogy are evident. The educational problem being that (bush)walking and its universalized notion of ‘bush’ has typically reduced walking to a technical activity that has historically/recreationally instrumentalized Nature merely as a background object (Blades, 2021). Furthermore, the historical and cultural meanings of ‘bush’ are contentious as settler colonial interpretations erased the presence of Indigenous culture (Harper, 2007, 2017). For example, Slattery’s (2013) critique of the ‘journey narrative’ in OEd reveals how the broader historical valorization of exploration symbolized as the ‘hero’s journey’ in Australia has been uncritically accepted as ‘something to admire’ (p. 187).

Underpinning this educational problem also, as previously mentioned, is the masculinist emphasis and lingering patriarchal hegemony (Gray, 2016; Kennedy & Russell, 2021), whereby ‘hard’ activities, performative skills and safety/legal imperatives have privileged the ‘expert’ leader. These factors have done little to encourage engagement with important educational questions such as the very recent addition of ‘environmental’ to the term Outdoor Education (Rodrigues & Payne, 2017), and its alleged foregrounding of the central role of Nature.

With these problems briefly outlined, a reconstructive praxis, albeit a practice-based theorization of walking with/in Nature is proposed in this article. In doing so, this study sets out to interpret and understand the nature of walking as an embodied practice in various scapes of Nature, referred to as walkingS-capes. The next section discusses scholarly work that has contributed to the framing and approaches of this study.

## Sensing, moving and knowing: Some backgrounding

Walking returns the body to its original limits again, to something supple, sensitive, and vulnerable ... Walking shares ... that crucial element of engagement of the body and the mind with the world, of knowing the world through the body and the body through the world. (Solnit, 2001, p. 29)

This statement by Rebecca Solnit, eloquently positions walking philosophically and esthetically as an engagement with and in the world, as a way of knowing. As an existential experience of movement, walking lies at the ontological and phenomenological core of our corporeal being (Sheets-Johnstone, 2009). Studies of walking traverse many scholarly investigations related to bodily movement such as rhythmicity (Edensor, 2010) and perception (Ingold, 2011, Lund, 2005; Wylie, 2005) extending into anthropologies of wayfaring and wayfinding (Ingold, 2000, 2011), ethnographies of walking (Ingold & Vergunst, 2008) and, even, the philosophy of walking (Nicholson, 2008, Gros, 2014).

Themes of sensing, moving and knowing emerge strongly from this scholarship and inform the ontology and methodology of this study. In particular, Sarah Pink's (2012, 2015) sensuous ethnographies not only highlights the embodied nature of everyday lived experiences such as walking but also their interaction(s) with/in 'wider ecologies':

[T]hese ways of attending to practices in relation to other elements of the environment - materiality, technology, the senses - begin to raise questions about how we understand embodied practices in relation to the wider ecologies they are part of; where environments are not just social, material and technological, but multisensory, charged with energy, emotion, shifting with the weather, and contingent on the activity of non-human organisms too. (Pink, 2012, p. 23)

Expanding the meaning of environment to 'wider ecologies' in conjunction with the intercorporeality of humans and non-human organisms are indicative of 'more-than-human' perspectives. Abram (1997) explains how 'direct sensuous reality in all its more-than-human mystery' is an important experiential touchstone (p. x) and relates to our perception as a 'dynamic participation between ... body and things' (p. 62). In other words, there exists the inseparability of mind, body and world, an ontology which underpins this study.

This wider identification of/with/in Nature is indicative of less anthropocentric biases in research and is recognized as critically important in EEd research (see Payne (2018a, 2020). Iared and Oliveira's (2017) literature review of walking ethnographies provides examples of research from 'non-anthropocentric perspectives' highlighting walking and the value of 'corporeal and multisensorial interactions' in EEd (p. 97) which is a strong justification of this study.

Furthermore, EEd research inclusive of walking/movement methodologies in/with/as Nature offer different practical-conceptual-methodological-empirical ways to access phenomena. For example, the study of ecomotricity as/in movementScapes by Rodrigues (2018) radically revises the standardized views of movement as 'commodified, body-environment relations of performativity' to one of 'an immanent movement of humans and other-than-humans-beings-in-nature' (p. 92). Praxically, Payne's (2014) 'vagabonding' as 'slow' ecopedagogical bodily sensory, embodied movement, afforded ecologically 'within aesthetics of meaning-making' emphasizes the intercorporealities and praxes of bodies~timespaces in two by three-day discovery and rediscovery experiential learning encounters in a beach/coastalScape (p. 52). Whitehouse's (2018) snorkeling with/in repeated immersive experiences demonstrates the bodied/watered inductive logic of her embodied timespace encounters in the reefs as/in oceanScapes.

These examples of slow, recyclical encounters, the latter derived from first-person experiences, assertively demonstrate, and materialize 'the potential for the empirical-conceptual qualification of a "practice theory of ecopedagogy" in EEd research' (Payne, 2020, p. 127) which this study aims to demonstrate and contribute to. The next section foregrounds some of the concepts and contexts of ecopedagogy and its 'fit' within this study of walkingScapes.

### **Ecopedagogy: Some foregrounding**

Contemporary interest in ecopedagogy emerged as a social movement as proposed in the global North by Kahn (2010) and in the global South by Gadotti (2000). There are various positions of ecopedagogy from micro to macro scales, notwithstanding the cultural variations of global North/South perspectives. At a macro level, the need for deepened and widened understandings of praxis grounded in

socio-environmental justice and planetary sustainability, including disrupting anthropocentrism is a central tenet (Misiaszek, 2022).

From this brief snapshot of ecopedagogy exists the messy dilemmas of north/south tensions and the ‘rush of new theory in the Anthropocene’ (Payne, 2018b, p. 76). Payne’s (2020) documentation of ‘ecological teaching and environmental learning approaches developed in the late 1970s (in North America)’ (p. 121) provides examples of ecopedagogies and ecologies flagged forty years ago ‘in the founding principles’ of EEd (Palmer, 1998). Many of these examples illustrate proximal embodied time-space ecological praxes (Payne, 2020). Yet as Payne (2018b) asserts, top down approaches to research and curriculum design ‘overwhelms innovation in ecopedagogical experimentation’ (p. 75). Hence the counterlogic of a ‘practice theory turn’ is applied in the Special Issue of *Ecopedagogies as/in scapes* via inductive ‘grounds up’ theorizing with the inclusions of scapes, scopes and scales (Payne, p. 72, 75).

Examples of ecopedagogical ‘encounters’ were well illustrated in the assemblage of up to 30 practical, empirical studies as/in various geo-cultural-epistemological environmental education settings (Payne, 2018a). Included in this assemblage were the movement experience of ecomotricity (Rodrigues, 2018), the decolonized experience of Indigenous foodScapes (Ma Rhea, 2018), the centrality of time-space scapes (Dunkley, 2018), encountering ecocidal consequences in oceanScapes (Whitehouse, 2018), canoeing the waters of a long river (Stewart, 2018), and leisurely bodily e(Scapes) in tourist experiences (Nakagawa, 2018). Importantly, Payne’s (2018a) metamethodological assemblage incorporated a wide variety of theoretical presumptions and positionings by the contributing authors. A ‘solid’ evidence base was established in reconstructively ‘building’ practice theory in different scapes. Related aims of this article are to confirm, refine and extend those existing findings of ‘ecopedagogy as/in scapes’ and contribute to the ongoing work of ‘practice theorization’ in EEd and OEd curriculum critique and reconstructive praxis.

In summary, the more precise purpose and context of this study is to access, interpret and describe the nature of embodied movement(s), in this case walking, with/in scapes of Nature, over various ‘episodes’ of time ~ space<sup>4</sup> encounters. Hence, the deeper methodological purpose of this study is to openly address the evasive question of how ‘best’ to access embodied, moving experiences that can provide probable evidential insights into various ecopedagogical encounters with/in walkingScapes. The following section summarizes the key contextual and conceptual ‘waypoints’ of the research methodology used in this study.

### **Wayfinding the nature of walking with/in Nature: Methodological overview**

Ontologically, in the spirit of ‘wayfinding’ (Ingold, 2000), my grounded felt sense of walking with/in Nature as Instone (2015) describes, embraces ‘the twin entanglements of movement and being moved’ (p. 137) that emphasize the felt/intercorporeal nature of my research. This non-Cartesian finding a/my way in Nature is pivotal in practically framing a relational ontology that is less anthropocentric and more ecocentric in its orientation. The chronic methodological problem confronted in the study of the nature of walking with/in scapes of Nature was how to wayfind a ‘more’ ecocentric ecopedagogy as/in scapes of Nature. This methodological problem highlights the embodied dilemma of decentering the centered subject, be it self and/or Nature’s environments ‘moved’ in. Also acknowledging my position as a female academic, with White settler ancestry in the (epistemological) production of knowledge in the context of North-South representations (Rodrigues, 2020).

The overarching methodological approach used in this study is autophenomenography that extends the first person ethnographic focus ‘further inward to the phenomenal layers of the researcher’s lived experience’ (Allen-Collinson, 2011, p. 53). First person narratives are powerful because they provide accounts of living contradictions, convergences and uncertainties (Ellis, 2004). With a focus on embodiment in this study, my subjective intercorporeal experiences offer insights that can stimulate ‘reflective practice’ in education (Humberstone, 2014). Additional methodological framings and variations adequate to suspend, or even overcome, the lingering anthropocentrism of conventional accounts of

pedagogy and learning in OEd and EEd are required. These additions include autoethnography (Adams, Holman, & Ellis, 2015; Chang, 2008), phenomenology (van Manen, 2014), and sensory ethnography (Pink, 2012, 2015). The following list of methodological ‘waypoints’ whilst set out in a linear text, overlap with each other in the ‘messiness’ of this ‘method assemblage’ (Law, 2004).

First, in a decentered wayfinding beyond various anthropocentric assumptions, an ‘ecophenomenological’ (Brown & Toadvine, 2003) framing for accessing the nature of walking with/in scapes of Nature is adopted. This extension of phenomenology is conceptualized by Toadvine (2009, p. 8) as ‘ecophenomenological’ framing of ‘nature experience’ with three intra and interrelated ecophenomenological questions that guide this reframing to access the phenomena under inquiry. The first question is what is the ‘*nature of experience?*’ (Toadvine, p. 8) and frames the first research question (RQ) of this study for Case one—‘What is afforded and felt whilst walking in Nature(s)?’ The second question is what is the ‘*experience of nature?*’ (Toadvine, p. 8) and frames the second RQ for Case two - ‘How and in what ways is (self-)meaning made from an affecting/sensing body by way of walking with/in Nature?’ This hybrid thinking of Nature–human interplay enables a recursive process between the RQs that is further developed by focusing practically and contextually on the ecopedagogical qualities and characteristics that are ‘scoped’ in each question. Toadvine’s third question asks of the first two questions, what is the ‘*relation between experience and nature?*’ (p. 8). This question is responded to *via* the ‘findings’ of RQ1 and RQ2 that are ‘(re)assembled’ and descriptively ‘scoped’ to inform a practice theorization of an ecopedagogy of walking.

Second, in wayfinding terms, the framing of ‘walking with’ acts to decenter the sphere of inclusion and access the often ‘nonrepresentational’ and affective/felt/lived ‘other’ (Instone, 2015; Springgay and Truman, 2018). As a critical walking methodology, ‘with’ intercorporeally fleshes out ‘the ethico-political (in)tensions brought to bear on walking, the grounds where one walks and the concepts, bodies ... that are co-composed through walking’ (Springgay & Truman, 2022, p. 175). These active relations arising from and materializing momentarily with/in time~space are too often invisible and non-represented in accounts of human experience and ecological learnings.

Thirdly, intercorporeally felt experiences and encounters and how they are apprehended as meaning making are accessed *via* the decentering processes of time~space bodily (soma) movements, whilst walking with/in the esthetics (living, more-than human) of Nature(s). Understood as somaesthetics (Shusterman, 2008), the emphasis of an ecologically attuned somaesthetics, referred to as ‘ecosomaesthetics’ (Payne, 2013), is an important ‘way’ and practical means of scoping scapes.

Finally, the use of the term ‘scape’ has empirical relevance to ecopedagogy as applied in this study. Terms such as ‘landscape’ are problematic and as Plumwood (2006) observes, ‘to describe the land as a ‘landscape’ is to privilege the visual over other, more rounded and embodied ways of knowing the land, for example, by walking over it’ (p. 123). Methodologically, the deliberate employment of the term ‘scape’ is an attempt to represent the corporeal fabric and aliveness of scapes of Nature and guided by Payne (2018a), is made present in conjunction with its ‘empirical scoping’.

As Payne (2018b) explains, ‘the scoping of various Scapes in any ecopedagogy serve many purposes,’ including ‘to connect and selectively “re”-assemble “movement” found in ... its human and other-than-human embeddedness in space-time’ (p. 77) as, in this study, walkingScapes. The sampled scapes are ‘scoped’ in terms of spatial, temporal and intercorporeal characteristics and layered as ‘relational scales’ of micro (body), meso (geo-cultural) and macro (global, cosmos). This process of *scoping* aims to keep ‘empirical closeness’ by ‘descriptively revealing the soma~time~space’ (Payne, 2013, p. 428) dimensions of my walking experiences.

To aid in differentiating the scopes a ‘sensory narrative framework’ adapted from lisahunter and emerald (2016) is used. It consists of three ‘sensory epistemologies’ or ‘epistemes’: the *senses* (the five sense sensorium); the *sensual* (the experience of the senses eg. mood, affect); and the *sensational* in narrative (what claimed my attention) (lisahunter & emerald, p. 40). Thematic findings are inductively interpreted from the scoping of the empirical data. Like Nicol (2013), three data sources are used: my direct experiences, my memory of experiences and, my reflections of experiences. There are three steps in the research design to collect, analyze and represent data. For the purpose of brevity, these are illustrated in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Pathways to research texts (adapted from lisahunter & emerald, 2016, p. 33).

Field texts consideration of evidence or data collected	Interim texts consideration of analysis	Research texts communicating the data or evidence as a narrative (representation)
<b>Case One and Two</b> Field journal: recording senses, affects, affordances. Photographs and images (author drawings)	<b>Case One and Two</b> Using categories of primary and secondary labeling from Chang (2008), data was organized into Data Sets.	<b>Case One</b> Sensory Impressionist Tales (Van Maanen, 2011) <b>Case Two</b> Sensory Pathic Vignettes (Adams et al., 2015; van Manen, 2014).

The limitation of ‘correspondence’ between lived experiences (of walking) and reductionist texts is acknowledged in the challenge of ‘non-representation’ (Thrift, 2008). Accessing and interpreting the felt affectivities of embodied experiences is difficult, in the very first instance, let alone understanding how ecologically dynamic the numerous environmentally ‘afforded’ encounters are within the broader contours and geographies of spatialized affect. A more obvious limitation is the generalizability of a ‘self study’ beyond the particulars of non/representation outlined above. Within these limits, my deliberations about decentering the question of accessing the ecophenomenological nature of walking/moving in Nature’s scapes aims to accommodate transferability of insights and approaches to ecopedagogical as/in scapes praxes.

To conclude this section, the inductive interpretive processes and pragmatic concerns of the material, embodied, intercorporeal, temporal and spatial layers of experience ‘scoped’ deeply in this autophenomenographic study, are what informs a practice theorization of walkingScapes as ecopedagogy. As mentioned in the introduction, to help the reader ‘live’ representationally in this short text, a small sample from the main study of two cases follow. These cases illustrate how the ecopedagogical nature of walking in sampled scapes of Nature is accessed autophenomenographically and scoped ecophenomenologically.

## Describing and interpreting embodied impressions of walking: Two cases

### Case 1: (Bush)walking with/in a mountainScape

This case responds primarily to the question of ‘what is afforded and felt whilst walking with/in Nature(s)?’ The sampled walk (eight days in duration) was conducted in my professional role as an outdoor environmental education lecturer as part of an undergraduate university curriculum related to a Unit called ‘Bush Environments’. This bushwalk occurred in a sub alpine/alpine mountainScape known as the Bogong High Plains in northeastern Victoria, Australia. From a total of 12 data sets, excerpts of two data sets follow which are the research texts narrated as sensory impressionist tales (Adams et al., 2015; Van Maanen, 2011). The text has a short geo-locale description followed by a sensory impressionist narrative (italicized font). Impressions (bold font) are what claimed my attention.

### Data set 1: (Bush)walking with/in human-formedScapes

Merging with the Alpine Walking Track, one of Australia’s long distance walking trails, this section of the trail is on an elevated boardwalk that winds its way across sphagnum bogs.<sup>5</sup>

*With the ease of taking even strides along this smooth, ordered surface, my pace quickens.  
Walking on constructed wooden pathways.  
Each footstep not leaving any imprint.  
Just the sound of my boots:  
clonk – clonk – clonk  
Bodily movement has regular rhythm.  
Strides are longer, pace is quicker.  
Spectatorial viewing of bogs and mosses occur whilst feet are separated from the ground.*

**Impressions: Affordance of walking on constructed pathways - routine and predictability. Mobile distant viewing of Nature.**

**Data set 2: (Bush)walking with/in weatherScapes**

This day of walking was along an elevated, exposed area.

*The afternoon brings a thick, dense fog that descends upon the ground. Suddenly the temperature is dropping, and strong gusts of wind pick up. My body leans into the wind, encountering a force that feels like it could blow me over!*

*Outer protective gear affords a layer of protection. My focus directed through the raincoat hood, maintaining attention on the students walking behind me. Is anyone stumbling?*

*The weather progressively worsens, and visibility is reduced to just a couple of meters in front of me. I feel my body lift, adrenalin perhaps? Suddenly the weight of my pack has almost completely gone. My stride is sure, holding the memory of many years leading groups in harsh weather conditions.*

**Impressions: An 'I can' revelation arises. Walking afforded by the outside elemental forces that reverberate and channel my attention.**

(Blades, 2020, p.115,116)

Table 2 below shows my decentered and intercorporeal scopings of the nature of my walking from these data sets that respond primarily to the question of 'what is afforded and felt whilst walking with/in Nature(s)?' and accessed from my body~time~space movements whilst (bush)walking with/in this mountainScape. Three micro-ecophenomenological scopes are identified and descriptively reveal *what* arose. These are *materialities* including environment, equipment, weather (affordances); *sensorium* (episteme of the senses); *affects* (episteme of the sensual).

In summary, a brief abductive interpretation follows. To describe and interpret what arose from my affecting, sensing walking body with/in Nature, my reflexive self as walker/educator/leader brought present (acknowledging limitations), intercorporeal, environmental and time~space encounters. For example, whilst walking with/in the weatherScape, my gait quickened to the swirls of wind gusts and encroaching white out as these 'hybrid agencies' of forces and pressure gradients (Ingold, 2010, p. 132) were felt, combined with a sense of urgency in relation to seeking safe shelter as the end of day was approaching as rapidly as the wild weather. The forces and intensity felt between the agential relations of walking body, ground and weather, were not a self against Nature but a self *in* Nature. As Wylie (2005) observes, such intense performances of walking are in one way 'a contraction of sensibility to the immediate environs' made present through the 'intercorporeal sensibility' of exertion and discomfort (p. 240).

My attention shifted as my subjective position moved between walker, educator, and (bush)walking leader. Whilst walking along boardwalks for instance, the separation from the ground afforded a mobile distant viewing of natural processes. Vannini and Vannini (2018) point out how, for environmental reasons, boardwalks serve to protect fragile ecosystems from being compacted but they also script a way of walking that removes us from our senseScapes.

These scopings reveal fluctuations of my decentered walking self and my centering as 'leader' across time~space encounters. My impressions reflect a hybrid interplay of ecophenomenological interactions of my walking movements and being moved with/in this mountainScape, revealing ecopedagogical precursors to what arose whilst walking.

**Table 2.** What is afforded/felt whilst walking with/in Nature.

Datasets	SCALE levels	SCOPE materialities (Affordances)	SCOPE Sensorium (Episteme of the senses)	SCOPE affects (Episteme of the sensual)
<i>(Bush)walking with/in human-formedScapes.</i>	Micro	tracks and boardwalks afforded rhythmic walking	Seeing Tactile; sound	Mobile distant viewing
<i>(Bush)walking with/in the weatherScapes</i>	Micro	Environmental conditions: cold; wind; rain; clear skies	adrenalin induced feeling; touch/tactile	Intensity

**Case 2: Wayfaring with/in a localScape and a saltlakeScape**

This case responds primarily to the question 'how and in what ways is (self-)meaning made from an affecting/sensing body by way of walking in Nature(s)?' The walks in this Case were done independently of university curriculum and framed as wayfaring. Ingold (2011) describes wayfarers as those who move



‘through the world’ and come to know as they go along (p. 134). The methodological addition of way-faring was a practical way for me to experiment with different walking practices with the two-fold purpose of shedding myself of practical/historical bushwalking leadership baggage and to ‘de-center’ my thinking/feeling with/in walkingScapes.

Two sensory vignettes (van Manen, 2014) are sampled. Vignette 1 (localScape) is called ‘Wayfinding out my door’ and adopts the theme ‘less gives way to more’ (Tredinnick, 2009) as a provocation for my wayfaring with/in my localScape in Castlemaine, central Victoria. Data sets are arranged across the four seasons of which Spring is illustrated here. Vignette 2 (saltlakeScape) is called ‘Wayfaring on the Edge of the Horizon’ located at Lake Tyrell in northcentral Victoria and includes a selected data set from a ‘photo gallery walk.’ The Vignette (italicized font) is complimented with photographs. Impressions (bold font) are what claimed my attention.

**Vignette 1 (localScape): Wayfaring out my door (Spring)**

*Out my door, barefoot, the rich smell of moist earth meets me. I know there will be signs of wildflowers, possibly orchids. Walking very slowly, stones and the hard ground make contact with my sensitive feet. This makes me pay attention to every step I take as I focus upon the ground. There, amongst bark and grasses, the small, delicate triangular shapes of purple flowers of the wax lip orchid, native to this area, meets my gaze.*



*Wax Lip Orchid.  
(Author's photo)*

**Impression: Slow and subtle steps give way to more vibrancy.**  
(Blades, 2020, p.152)

**Vignette 2 (photo gallery walk): saltlakeScape**



*The horizon surrounded me as a distant line, almost curvilinear in appearance. Imagining Lake Tyrell as a circle within a circle, I felt humble to walk here in the presence of such a vast, open space. Not noticing time. In the distance I could see a thin line extending across the lake. What was it? An old fence? Gradually walking the line took on texture and form, from a firm crust of salt to slowly sinking sludge-like clay. A curious encounter along the line of sand and saltwater. The meandering line of my walking changed to following a straight line of remnant posts, a line of imagining what was, what is, what could be.*



SaltlakeScape lines  
Author's photos

**Impression: Walking lines of imagining: what was, what is, what could be.**

(Blades, 2020, p.159)

**Table 3.** Wayfaring as embodied knowing.

Datasets	SCALE levels	SCOPE perceiving with sensorium	SCOPE perceiving with time ~ space	SCOPE perceiving with things
Vignette 1				
Spring	Micro	Tactile / haptic (barefoot) Vibrancy Softness of Scape	Slowness of pace illuminates subtleties in Nature	Paths Other-than human lines Seasonal other-than human indicators
Vignette 2				
Lines across scape	Meso	Orientation	Tangible and intangible lines	Other-than human
Past stories	Macro	Visible and invisible	Deep time	Salt lake reflection of the night sky; Artifacts

A summary of my decentered and intercorporeal scopings of the ‘nature’ of my embodied knowing whilst walking follows, responding primarily to the question ‘how and in what ways is (self-)meaning made from an affecting/sensing body by way of walking in Nature(s)?’ as shown in Table 3. In conjunction with wayfaring, ‘perceiving with’ is a methodological addition to scoping these walks and their scapes that aids in the interpretation of how (self-)meaning is made. Ingold (2011) explains that it is ‘not what we perceive’ but rather ‘what we perceive with’ (p. 88). Phenomena perceived are not separate and static but are ‘sets of relations’ where meaning arises (Ingold, p. 421). The ecophenomenological scopes include *perceiving with sensorium*, *perceiving with time ~ space* and *perceiving with things*.

In summary, a brief abductive interpretation follows. The wayfaring I engaged in was active and attentive as different types of movement, flows and rhythms were in continual ‘processual unfolding’ (Wylie, 2005) of meanings with/in Nature evident by experiences such as the cyclic, seasonal walks ‘out my door’. Whilst I was walking ‘solo’, I was not alone as my decentered subjectivity and intercorporeal encounters were experienced across micro, meso and macro layers. With attentiveness to ‘perceiving with’ a ‘wider ecology of things’ with/in time ~ space, these walking encounters were materially, imaginatively and symbolically made present. The impressions described and the thematic findings assembled are initial steps in interpreting what was ‘found’ as possible, probable ecopedagogical precursors as to how and in what ways (self-)meaning was made whilst wayfaring with/in these scapes of Nature.

### Reassembling an ecological praxis of walking

The preceding autophenomenographic descriptive and interpretive examples of two Cases are re-assembled in Table 4 as precursors of an ecological praxis of walking. What is reassembled are the ecophenomenological *scopes* in response to the research questions: (RQ1) *What is afforded and felt whilst walking* and (RQ2); *How and in what ways is (self-)meaning made from an affecting/sensing body by way of walking in Nature(s)?* Van Manen’s (2014) existential themes of spatiality, temporality, intercorporeality and relationality aid in organizing the synthesis of scoping the sensory, embodied ‘data’ and are summarized across the three scalar dimensions of micro, meso and macro.

Ecophenomenological relations found with/in the nature of walking experiences and experiences of walking with/in scapes of Nature and their ecopedagogical precursors inform a ‘practice theory’ of walkingScapes as ecopedagogy. This hybrid form of ecopedagogy brings together the interactive, relational and recyclical nature of walking with/in Nature that responds to the ecophenomenological questions. It is important to note that this praxis approach is a process of simplification and reduction of empirically driven findings that are as close as possible, lived examples of what was found in this study. Table 5 serves as a heuristic in my re-assembling of the findings of these two cases. For the purposes here, a synthesized list of ecopedagogical indicators drawn from the empirical scopings are (re)assembled and organized around the existential themes of spatiality, temporality, corporeality and relationality (van Manen, 2014).

Importantly, this (re)assembly does not set out a definitive list of what constitutes an ecopedagogy of walking. To be sure, descriptively, and interpretively, the heuristic purpose of Table 5 is to reconstruct an ecopedagogical framing for the ‘design’ of curriculum and ‘is one practical means through which the

**Table 4.** Reassembling an ecological praxis of walking (adapted from Payne, 2018c, p. 178).

Context and scapes (sampled in this study)	Scale and levels	Scopes (samples of): Spatiality, temporality, intercorporeality, relationality
<p><b>Case one: (RQ) What is afforded and felt whilst walking:</b>  <b>Context:</b> Performative outdoor environmental education bushwalking practice</p>		
Scapes: mountainScape	<p>Micro: Sensory, embodied movement (of self).                      Meso: Iconic mountainScape, commodified                      Macro: Hypermobile; climate change</p>	<p><i>Spatiality:</i> Proximity and distance <i>via</i> mobile distant viewing or predicated with/in bodily movements in response to scape.  <i>Temporality:</i> Time prescribed and predictable.  <i>Intercorporeality:</i> Sensing, feeling and affected with/in mountain ecologies of movement.  <i>Relationality:</i> Movement and environmental affordances, pragmatically variable with/in intensities of bushwalking.</p>
<p><b>Impressions (dataset 1):</b> Affordance of walking on constructed pathways - routine and predictability. Mobile distant viewing of Nature  <b>Impressions (dataset 2):</b> An 'I can' revelation arises. Walking afforded by outside elemental forces that reverberate and channel my attention.</p>		
<p><b>Case two: (RQ) How and in what ways is (self-)meaning made from an affecting/sensing body by way of walking in Nature(s)?</b>  <b>Context:</b> Embodied knowing whilst wayfaring</p>		
Scapes: localScape and saltlakeScape	<p>Micro: Perceiving 'with' sensate and affected walking body.                      Meso: Locally situated; peri-urban; disturbed scapes.                      Macro: Indigenous culture present and made absent.</p>	<p><i>Spatiality:</i> Ecologies of local geo-epistemologies, contested, convergent and absent.  <i>Temporality:</i> Cyclical and rhythmic with/in present time.  <i>Intercorporeality:</i> Movement and environmental affordances, sensuous and affected.  <i>Relationality:</i> Present in movement and stillness, inter/intra-active relating.</p>
<p><b>Impression (Vignette 1):</b> <i>Slow and subtle steps give way to more vibrancy.</i>  <b>Impression (Vignette 2):</b> <i>Walking lines of imagining: what was, what is, what could be</i></p>		

**Table 5.** Ecopedagogical indicators of embodied walking with/in scapes.

Thematic scopes	Ecopedagogical indicators of walking
<b>Spatiality:</b> Embodied space of Self ~ social ~ ecologies.	<p>Rhythmically attuned with/in Nature                      Nature is central with/in the flow and flux of walking experienced and afforded (in)variably as environmental and other ecological processes; often encountered as walking flows and rhythmicity naturally arising.                      WalkingScapes affording convergent and discordant affects as/ in geo-historical-cultural presences and absences.</p>
<b>Temporality:</b> Immersion with/in time ~ space: natural rhythms; deep time.	<p>Inter/intra-actions of time ~ space whilst walking.                      A temporal ~ spatial quality of 'slowness' or an activeness of 'slowing down' whilst walking. Enacted by natural rhythms, slow time or pace of walking, and repeated walks in scapes.                      Convergent and sometimes discordant encounters                      Repeat witnessing of localized encounters</p>
<b>Corporeality:</b> Immanent vibrancy & aliveness with/in nature & movement; agentic Nature often enigmatic.	<p>Intercorporeal encounters with/of/by Nature(s) afforded by environmental and cultural conditions.                      Awakened sensibility by attending to what is present.                      Afforded sensorially and inter/intra-actively presented as a 'perceptual affectivity' with/in/of body ~ time ~ space.</p>
<b>Relationality:</b> Inter/intra-actions; meaning-making; sensorially, divergent, dissonant, convergent, haptic.	<p>Nature-human-culture inter/intra-relations active.                      Absent cultural presences brought forth through eco-critical witnessing.                      Eco-ethical imperatives of walkingScapes.</p>

(adapted from Blades, 2020).

role of the teacher, guide, leader, facilitator of significant encounters can be envisaged before, during, and after experiences' (Payne, 2018c, p. 184).

These indicators identify many of the previously nonrepresentational but practically and materially embodied qualities of walking that, too often, 'go missing' and are invisible in the dominant masculinist curriculum constructions and pedagogical practices of traditional bushwalking and more broadly, outdoor learning experiences. Acknowledging the limitations of what has been partially accessed, presenced, and absenced in this reassembling of a limited number of samples, these emergent, embodied ecopedagogical indicators provide an empirically grounded and intercorporeally embodied means of generating a nascent inter/cross disciplinary theorization of walkingScapes as ecopedagogy which is discussed in the final section.

### Walking toward an ecopedagogy as/in scapes

In conclusion, I summarize how a) this autophenomenographic study confirms the emergent empirical-conceptual 'body' of evidence about ecopedagogy with/in the material turn to practice theory in OEd and EEd and, b) extends the ecopedagogical scape and scope 'body' *via* some of the key findings listed above.

Three key priorities from the 2018 meta-empirical study of 'ecopedagogy as/in scapes' are summarized by Payne (2020, p. 114): 1. the centrality of Nature experiences; 2. the importance of momentary and episodic movement(s) experiences/ecomotricity; and 3. 'slow' immersive and intercorporeal encounters with/in enigmatic and dynamic Nature(s). The findings from this 'self' (now decentered/intercorporeal) study of the nature of (bush)walking with/in scapes of Nature present similar priorities that (re)construct an ecopedagogical form and style of walking as embodied movements.

First, this study contributes to the possibilities and contributions that ecopedagogy as/in scapes offers in relation to a 'new' way to develop and implement environmental learning and curriculum design (Payne, 2018c). Accessing embodied qualities of walking with/in scapes of Nature using an inductive approach, reverses the 'gaps' from the 'trickle down' approaches to theory (Payne, p. 179) thereby contributing to a 'practice theory of walkingScapes as ecopedagogy.

Also supporting the existing and emergent empirical-conceptual 'body' of evidence of 'ecopedagogy as/in scapes' as noted above, the consistent presence of Nature's environments and natural processes in this study locates Nature in the center, not merely as a background object. Contributing to this is the two-fold ecophenomenological interplay between the human bodily movements and movements in/of/with Nature whilst walking. Witnessed as 'twin entanglements of movement and being moved' (Instone, 2015, p. 137), my walking experiences were felt as mutually receptive interactive encounters with/in Nature. The nature of these encounters was one of 'implication' with/in our world. Mathews (2005, p. 55) explains that when the gap between ourselves as subjects and things as objects begins to close, we become 'implicated'. In other words, as James (2009) states, 'we can be in nature in the sense of being involved with it' (p. 10). My impressions were examples of this as they represented moments that claimed my attention whilst 'involved' with/in Nature. An implication for us ecopedagogues is that 'Nature is a driver of curriculum design' (Rodrigues, 2018, p. 99).

Direct and proximal embodied walking encounters with/in scapes of Nature enables noticing and responsiveness of/with living things, akin to what Bonnett (2009) suggests as requiring a 'creative receptive responsiveness' (p. 183). My decentered, intercorporeal engagement of walking and my experimentation with different forms and styles such as wayfaring, provided creative receptive ways of walking. Furthermore, the ontological and epistemological emphasis of ecosomaesthetics not only adds richness and depth to walkingScapes as ecopedagogy but also is an important conceptual thread. As a practice theory that is grounded in ecosomaesthetics, our 'bodily or somatic amnesia' (Sheridan, 2002) is awakened and bodily agency is realized. Direct experiencing of my 'lived body' walking with/in time (past, present, future) and space (embodied Nature) in movement(s), afforded affectively, sensorially and inter/intra-actively in relation with/in scapes of Nature, contributes to a less anthropocentric bias in relation to the nature of walking practices and hence provides a critical (re)construction of (bush)walking in OEd and EEd.

For instance, scoping embodied knowing as a process of ‘perceiving with,’ revealed interactions between sensorium ~ time ~ space with/in walkingScapes.

Knowing does not happen of its own accord. Ecopedagogically, the nature of being ‘involved’ with Nature adds further to the importance of ‘encounter’ as it relates to ‘ecopedagogies as/in scapes’ (Payne, 2018c, p. 181). Encounters with/in the ‘now of the experience’ (Payne, p. 181), where attention and engagement such as observing/witnessing and monitoring are apparent in this context. These embodied encounters consisted of my ‘moving’ sensory, emotional, cognitive and memory experiences that were felt, sometimes ambivalent, absent or enigmatic, uncertain, unsettled, joyful, exciting. This variability of my body ~ time ~ space encounters was afforded pragmatically with/in the walkingScapes sampled in this study.

This autophenomenographic study demanded of me a critically reflexive praxis that extends the nascent ecopedagogical scape and scope ‘body’ of findings as assembled by Payne (2018a). Methodologically, the nature of my embodied walking inductively scoped and summarized in Tables 4 and 5, illustrate ‘a corporeal route to the sensorial and emotional affects’ of my research encounters (Pink, 2015, p. 147). The de-centering of the human (self), at least partially, reveals otherwise, the outer ‘things’ active in what was afforded and more so, the nature of affordances, as convergent, discordant, constraining or enabling.

Qualifying walking as ‘walking with/in’ provides an ontological and practical means to decenter the human self that is ecologically interactive and, often, nonrepresentationally relational. Some of that ‘non’ is, now presenced, at least, and descriptively ‘representational’. It also widens the sphere of inclusion of ‘other’ and, as previously mentioned, ‘implicates’ us as active agents involved with/in Nature. This nuance of ‘with-ness’ aligns with the ecophenomenological framing of this study as an engagement with, and witnessing of, ‘others’.

As an experientially sourced, critically reflexive way finding of an ecopedagogy of walking, there are ethical and political imperatives for being with/in Nature. Imperatives that are crucial as we walk on the edges of Anthropogenic climate change, global pandemic and fast culture(s). An eco-becoming as/in walkingScapes that is ecopedagogically practiced as ecosomaesthetic walking encounters with/in Nature can bring you *here*. This not only offers a (re)newed way to develop and implement environmental learning and curriculum design but also goes to what matters ethically. As Indigenous elder Paddy Roe<sup>6</sup> poignantly states:

... we have to walk the land. Then we wake up to feeling ... and we become more alive ... And that’s the time you start to experience, when the land pulls you and takes over. We have to learn to see again, learn to walk, to feel all these things again. So if there’s a process where we can be guided through to learn to get to the stage of making contact with the land again, we get some calling of responsibility ourself.

(Roe & Hoogland, 1999, p. 11)

## Next steps

The first person practical narratives in this article have particular ‘geo-epistemological ground emplacement’ (Rodrigues, 2018, p. 99) in selected sites in southeastern Australia, thus presenting potential limitations. In considering these limitations the ‘next steps’ include:

- More practical studies of walkingScapes in the context of ecopedagogy. In particular, the learner’s experiences.
- Critical walking methodologies, as Springgay and Truman (2022) assert, ‘need to interrogate how place is entwined with the social, material, cultural, and political dimensions of diverse human bodies, experiences, and communities’. (p. 172). Moreover, there are embedded assumptions of settler emplacement in walking practices that deny First Nations presence and sovereignty (Decter, 2022; Harper, 2017; Waitt et al., 2009). Associated with these assumptions are problems of culturally constructed versions of white) ‘place’ pedagogies (Payne, (2018b)). There are gaps and absences in relation to walking that demand further research in EEd and OEd.

## Notes

1. The term Nature is complex, has multiple meanings and interpretations. It can be understood in relation to what is 'natural' such as natural processes and elements as well as the relationship between Nature and human agency (Brennan & Lo, 2010). In this article, what is referred to as Nature are derivatives such as 'environments', 'landscapes' and 'bush'.
2. The term bushwalking refers to recreational walking in Australia, but tramping, hiking, trekking and backpacking are terms used in other countries. In this article, brackets are sometimes used for (bush)walking as a point of emphasis on the scoping of both 'bush' as a scape and walking.
3. For clarification, throughout this article an upper case 'N' is used to distinguish Nature from 'the nature of' phenomena.
4. For clarification, Payne (2017) uses tildes (~) as an attempt to represent the mutually constitutive nature of terms often 'texted' in a dualistic or binary~polar manner. Tildes are used in a similar way throughout this article.
5. "Sphagnum bogs consist of "dense fibrous mounds that have huge capacity to hold and regulate water flow and retain silt" (Slattery, 2015, p. 70).
6. Paddy Roe (now deceased), JabirrJabirr elder, was instrumental in establishing the Lurujarri Dreaming Trail following an ancestral dreaming track. It is located on the coastline north of Broome, in Western Australia. His vision was for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to walk together.

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