This paper is an attempt to interpret the oldest settlement names on the island of Visingsö, on Lake Vättern in Småland. The very oldest of them include a number that were originally nature names: Ed ‘isthmus, portage’, Näs ‘spit, foreland’ and Ströja (OSw. Stro, a stream name). A few names in -lösa and -inge also belong to the earliest stratum: Avlösa (OSw. *Aghurlösa, with the first element *aghur ‘point, tip’), Vrixlösa (with the first element *vrigh ‘curve, bend’) and Rökinge (perhaps referring to settlers from Rök in Östergötland). A large number of names in -by and -stad are also pre-Christian, but probably refer to secondary settlement units divided off from even older ones. Asby (‘village by the ridge’) and Stigby (‘village by the road’) may be assumed to have Näs as their parent settlement, while Säby (‘village by the lake’) was probably formed from part of Kumlaby. Erstad (with the first element OSw. *ælre ‘(stand of) alder’ or *Ælre-edh ‘the alder isthmus’) and Ostad (OSw. Odhestadhir, possibly with an OSw. *odhe ‘ford’ as its first element) are both secondary settlements from Ed. Hagaby (‘village by the enclosure’), Lundby (‘village by the sacred grove’), Vallby (‘village by the level grassland’), Grönstad (with the first element OSw. *græni ‘(stand of) spruce’) and Kängstad (probably with the first element OSw. *thiæghn ‘freeman, warrior’, as an appellative or a man’s name) are also probably secondary settlement units.

The large village of Kumlaby may be assumed to have originally had the name *Kumla, the plural of kummel ‘monument’, referring to barrows, cairns or other ancient monuments. The same word is also found in Gottekumla (the first element of which could be a man’s name Gute or the word gute ‘Gotlander’), although the latter is likely to be a medieval settlement unit.

Tunnerstad is a difficult name to interpret. The author suggests two main possibilities: (1) OSw. Tunnastadhir, with a man’s name *Tunne as its first element; (2) the place-name element Tuna, indicative of a central place, as the first element of either *Tunastadher ‘place of a tuna’ or *Tunastadhir, a settlement secondary to a *Tuna that has now disappeared.

Names from the Viking period or the early Middle Ages include Husaby (from OSw. husaby ‘farm serving as a royal administrative centre’) and Torp (‘farm established from a larger settlement’), which is probably a secondary settlement from Kumlaby.
The presumably medieval name *Husgärde* (OSw. *Hofsgærđhe*) most likely means ‘the enclosed land belonging to the settlement of *Hof*. *Hof*, with the sense ‘cultic building’, may be assumed to be the name of yet another now lost settlement unit. *Rönäs* (OSw. *Ryniuos* ‘headwater’ or ‘stream by the *Rynia* spring*’), too, is probably a medieval settlement.