

Windy Old Weather

1 As we were a-fishing off Happisburgh light,
Shooting and hauling and trawling all night,

**It was windy old weather,
stormy old weather,
When the wind blows we all pull
together.**

2. When up jumped a herring, the queen of
the sea
Said "Now, old skipper, you cannot catch me"

**In this windy old weather,
stormy old weather,
When the wind blows we all pull
together.**

3. We sighted a thresher, a-slashing his tail
"Time now, old skipper, to hoist up your sail".

**In this windy old weather,
stormy old weather,
When the wind blows we all pull
together.**

4. When along comes a mackerel with stripes
on his back

"Time now old skipper, to shift your
main tack"

**In this windy old weather,
stormy old weather,
When the wind blows we all pull
together**

5. Then up jumps a slipper-sole as strong
as a horse,

Said "Now old skipper, you're miles off your
course"

**In this windy old weather,
stormy old weather,
When the wind blows we all pull
together.**

6. We sighted a plaice that had spots on
his side

Said "Not much longer these seas you
can ride"

**In this windy old weather,
stormy old weather,
When the wind blows we all pull
together.**

7. Then aft wears a conger as long as a mile
"Wind's b'coming easterly!" he says,
with a smile,

**In this windy old weather,
stormy old weather,**

**When the wind blows we all pull
together.**

8. I think what these fishes were saying
is right,
We'll haul in our gear now, and steer for
the light.

**In this windy old weather,
stormy old weather,
When the wind blows we all pull
together.**

Hear [Bob Roberts](#) sing this version at
youtu.be/Ak4cSiTOq9k

Notes:

A **capstan** and **halyard**
shanty.

Other names: The
Boston come-all-ye, The
fishes, The Happisburgh
light song, Windy old
weather

Happisburgh - Norfolk,
pronounced Haze-broh



Flying fish by [ribbla](#)
on openclipart.org

This version is by [Bob Roberts](#) (1907-1982),
bargemaster, the last captain of a British
commercial vessel operating under sail.

Sam Larner (1878-1965) for his 1961 LP *Time for
Fishing* wrote:

"According to Captain W.B. **Whall**, this song was at
one time used as a shanty to the tune of Blow the
Man Down.

"It is exceedingly popular with East-Anglian
fishermen but is rarely encountered in other parts of
Great Britain.

"It is found in Nova Scotia and in the U.S. where it is
known as The Boston Come-All-Ye.

Kipling in *Captains Courageous* tells us it was
popular with the Banks fishermen."

Some more verses:

Up jumped the sprat, the smallest of all,
He sang out, "Old Skipper, you'll lose all your trawl!"

Up jumps the eel with his slippery tail,
Climbs up aloft, and reefs the topsail;

Up jumps the whale, the largest of all,
"If you want any wind, well, I'll blow ye a squall!"