

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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Wash Weel the Fresh Fish

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Wash weel the fresh fish, wash weel the fresh fish,
Wash weel the fresh fish,
 An' skim weel the bree,
For there's mony a foul-fitted thing, mony a foul-fitted
thing,
Mony a foul-fitted thing, I' the saut sea.

I'll catch the white fish, I'll catch the white fish,
I'll catch the white fish.
 To please my lassie's ee;
But the bonny black-backit fish, the bonny black-backit
fish,
The bonny black-backit fish
 Has aye the sweetest bree.

Paul Past & Present of Aberdeenshire (1881), 152 (no. 18)
[lines regularised]; Rymour Club Misc. III (1928), 184;
Nicht at Eenie (1932), 15; Montgomerie SNR (1946), 39
(no. 25).

Cf. a rhymed saying/proverb from the Mintlaw district of
Buchan, in Rymour Club Misc. II (1912-19), 16: "Wash weel
your fresh fish, and scum weel your bree;/ For there's mony a
foul-fitted beast swims in the sea."

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