

Fishing in Shetland

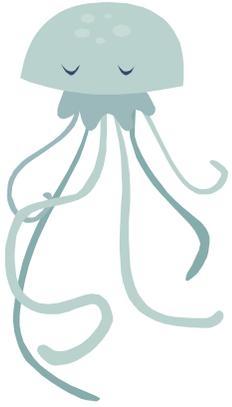
Through the
years



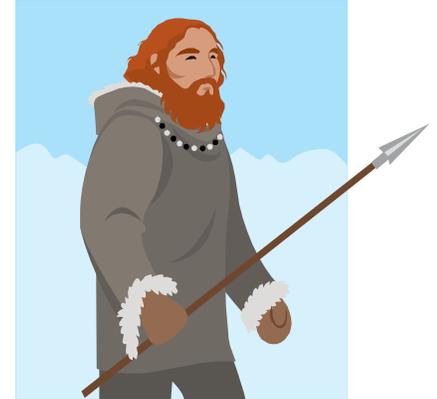
Primary
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Fishing for food!

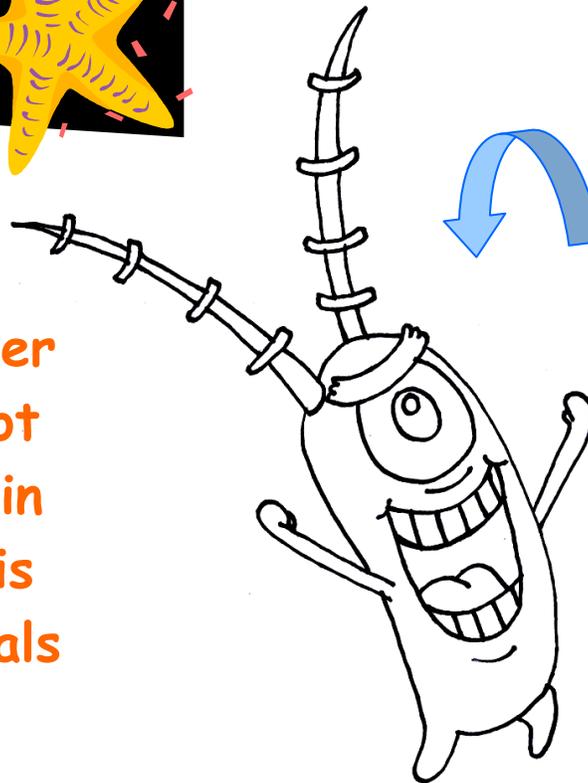


The first people to settle in Shetland went fishing for food!



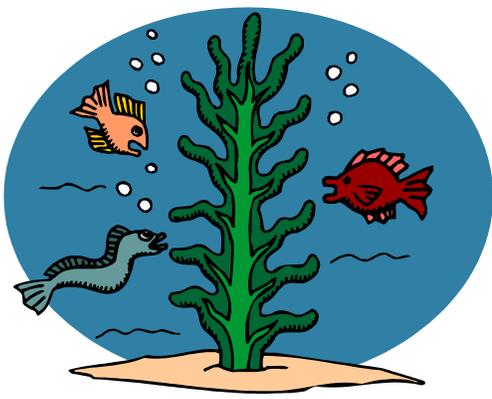
The seas of Shetland have a lot of life!

In the summer there is a lot of plankton in the sea—this attracts shoals of fish!



This is Plankton—he's from Spongebob Squarepants. Colour him in!

People go and catch the fish that swim in the shores of Shetland.



Gifts from the sea!



Catching fish kept people from going hungry when crops didn't grow well.



Seaweed was gathered to put on fields.

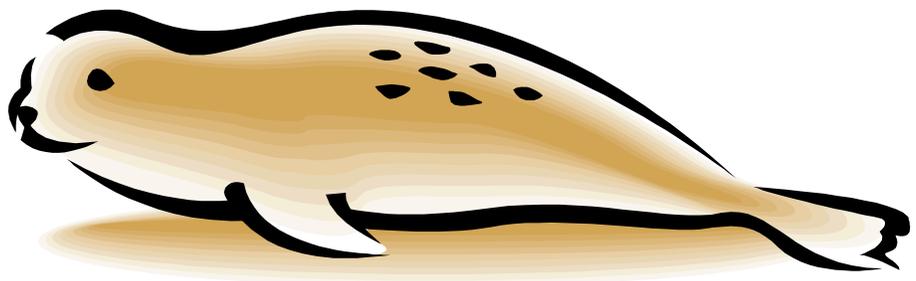
Seaweed helps the crops to grow!

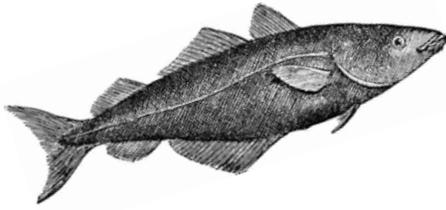


Driftwood that was washed ashore was used to build houses and tools.

The oil, bones and skin from sea mammals were used by Shetlanders, and they were very important!

The meat from these sea mammals was eaten.



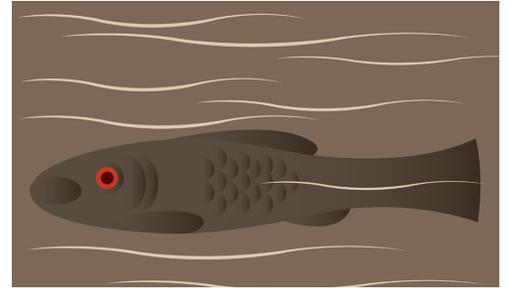


Piltocks!



Piltocks (or 'coalfish') are found all over Shetland.

They are easier to catch than other fish because they swim on the surface of the water.



Piltocks were an important part of people's diets in Shetland, especially when food was scarce.

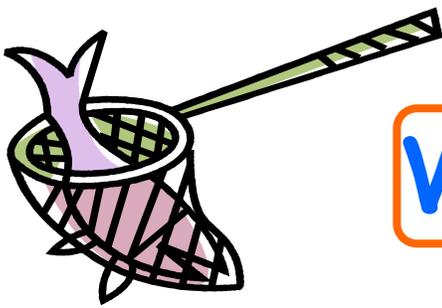
They could be eaten fresh, or salted.

Fish keeps for longer if you dry it then salt it.



You may have to pull them off the same line, but piltocks definitely don't taste like socks!

Salted fish were dried outdoors in summer and hung indoors in winter—they lasted a long time!



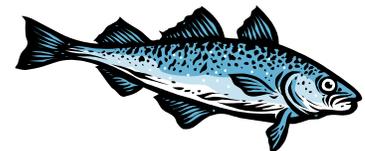
Ways to fish



Drag a hand line through the water and you will catch mackerel and piltocks!



Pull a hand line up and down to catch haddock—they swim deeper than mackerel!



You could use this hand line to catch haddock!

Set lines on the seabed to catch deep water swimmers like cod or ling!



Spear flatfish from the seabed!

Today fishing is sometimes done in big boats called trawlers—they go far out to sea and have lots of machinery onboard!





Boats!



At first, boats arrived from Norway—Shetland didn't have enough wood to build their own.

These boats arrived in parts, and the Shetlander put all the parts together.



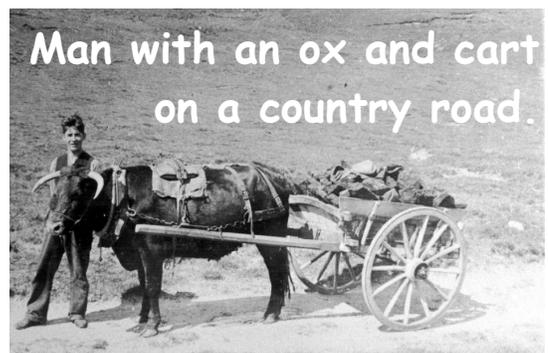
Vikings travelled to Shetland on longships!



Boats could even be used to move ponies and sheep from one place to another!

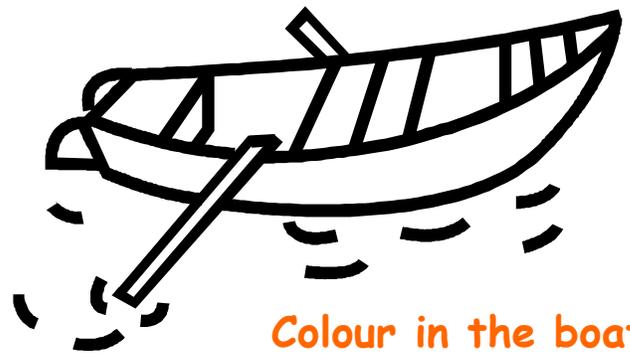
For a long time, boats were the easiest way to travel and to move goods from one place to another.

When more roads were built, people started using them regularly, and used their boats less often.



Man with an ox and cart on a country road.

Types of boats



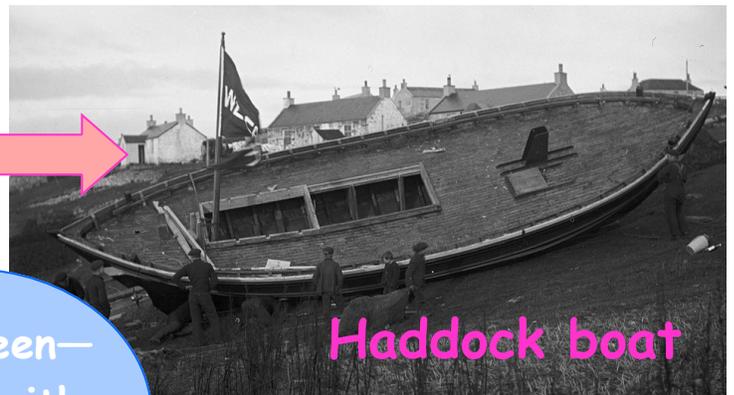
Colour in the boat!



Small whilly

The smallest of the open boats—it can be used close to the shore for fishing or visiting the shop!

Used for winter haddock fishing. It had to be strong and sea worthy!



Haddock boat



Fourareen

Fourareen—boats with four pairs of oars!

Fourareens can be lots of different shapes and sizes—they are often painted colourfully!

It is the largest of the open boats and has a crew of 6 or 7. They were used for haaf fishing far out at sea.



Sixareen

There are ponies in the boat!

Let's trade!

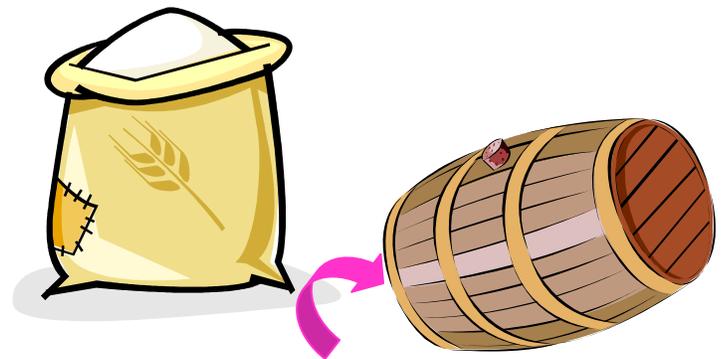


Shetlanders sometimes swapped their fish with other people who offered things.



People from Germany and Holland travelled over to Shetland in boats.

They brought flour, linen, pottery and beer with them.



A barrel of beer!



Fresh meat!

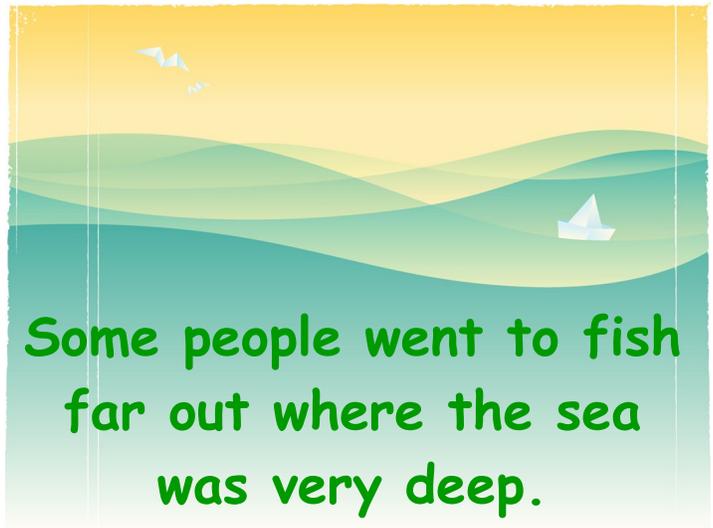
These were things that people in Shetland didn't grow or make.



Shetlanders would give fish, fresh meat, butter and knitted clothes in return.

In 1707, a law stopped Germans from trading with Shetland. The 'lairds' (landlords) then took control of trading.

Haaf fishing



Some people went to fish far out where the sea was very deep.

Haaf means 'deep sea' or 'ocean'

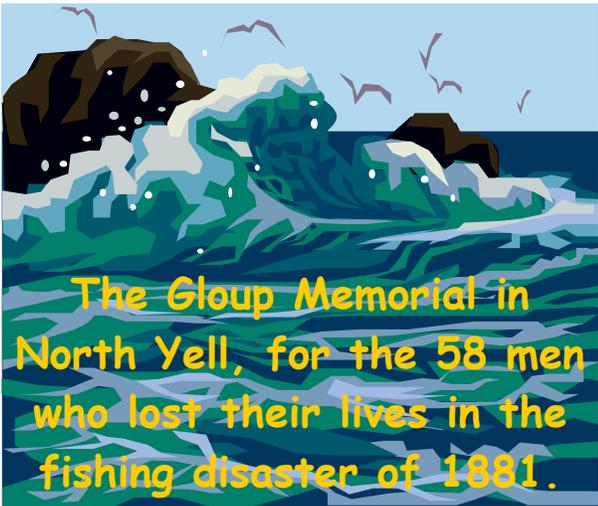
When a Shetlander says someone is 'at da haaf', they mean someone is away deep sea fishing!

Shetlanders first went to the haaf because their landlords made them.



The landlords took the fish that was caught. The fishermen were hungry and poor, even though they worked very hard.

Fishing so far out at sea is very dangerous—some men were lost at sea.

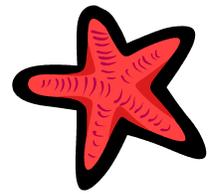


The Gloup Memorial in North Yell, for the 58 men who lost their lives in the fishing disaster of 1881.

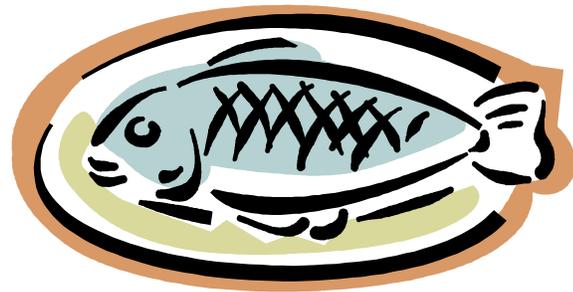




Fishing today!



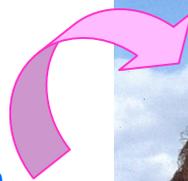
Fishing is still important to Shetlanders today!



Their boats are bigger— bigger boats are safer than the boats they used to fish in.

They have more tools and machines to help them.

Look at the machine lifting up these nets on a boat in Lerwick!



Fishing is still a dangerous job!