

A-CRAWLIN' IN YOUR WHISKERS

One of Canada's most iconic folk songs, the song recounts his experience while he was visiting Northern Ontario with an Ontario Hydro survey party to study the feasibility of a dam on the Little Abitibi River, which flows north towards James Bay. You can hear this song performed by the author at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D7gvotoVFII>, or on the HFMS Audio Archive page at [http://www.houstonfolkmusic.org/HFS Audio Archive.html](http://www.houstonfolkmusic.org/HFS_Audio_Archive.html). Capo II to play along with the recording.

THE BLACKFLY SONG

By Wade Hemsworth

C

'Twas early in the spring when I decided to go

Am

For to work up in the woods in North Ontar-i-o

C

And the unemployment office said they'd send me through

Am

To the Little Abitibi with the survey crew

CHORUS:

Am

C

And the blackflies, the little blackflies, Always the blackfly, no matter where you go

Dm

C

Em

Am

I'll die with the blackfly picking my bones, In North Ontar-io-io! In North Ontario

The man Black Toby was the captain of the crew

And he said, "I'm gonna tell you boys what we're gonna do."

"They want to build a power dam and we must find a way

"For to make the little Ab flow around the other way" **CHORUS**

'Twas blackfly, blackfly everywhere

A-crawlin' in your whiskers, a-crawlin' in your hair

Swimmin' in the soup, and Swimmin in the tea

The Devil take the blackfly, let me be **CHORUS**

Black Toby fell to swearin', the work went slow

And the state of our morale was a-gettin' pretty low

And the flies swarmed heavy, it was hard to catch a breath

As you staggered up and down the trail talkin' to yourself **CHORUS**

At last the job was over, Black Toby said "We're through

"With the Little Abitibi and the survey crew."

'Twas a wonderful experience and this I know

I'll never go again to North Ontar-i-o **CHORUS**