

### Proposal to add a mosquito emoji character

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#### Abstract

I am requesting the addition of a mosquito emoji. This emoji would fill a huge gap in representing what Bill Gates calls “the deadliest animal in the world”<sup>1</sup>. Dozens of known, and perhaps many unknown, mosquito species can carry viruses and parasites as passengers. These pathogenic micro-organisms can kill more humans than any other animal is capable of.

The formal name for this emoji could be MOSQUITO, with aliases including AEDES, MOSQUIT and MOZZIE.

#### Proposal

We propose to add the following Emoji character to fill a gap in food emoji characters

Code point	Name	B&W (72x72)	Colour sample (72x72)	To represent	Freq. in Google Trends	Class
To be determined	MOSQUITO			Mosquitoes	1.06	Animal and insect

#### Background

Mosquitoes affect millions of people around the world each year by spreading a host of known, and unknown viral and non-viral infections which include Dengue virus, Chikungunya virus, West Nile virus, Japanese encephalitis virus, Yellow Fever virus, Zika virus and Malaria parasites.

The prevalence of disease varies with season and as cases and deaths rise each year so does media interest and community concern soon follows thereafter. I foresee, as a virologist of 23 years, a significant interest in using a mosquito emoji in texts, social media and email.

While there are hundreds of different mosquito species, this emoji is based on species of the *Aedes* genus which include carriers of many human disease-causing viruses such as *Aedes albopictus* and *Aedes aegypti*. In my opinion it is a highly relevant emoji and given that differences between many of the mosquito species can only be identified by experts and with microscopes, this generic *Aedes* mosquito emoji is a very good starting point upon which others may choose to build on the future.

## FACTORS FOR INCLUSION

### Compatibility

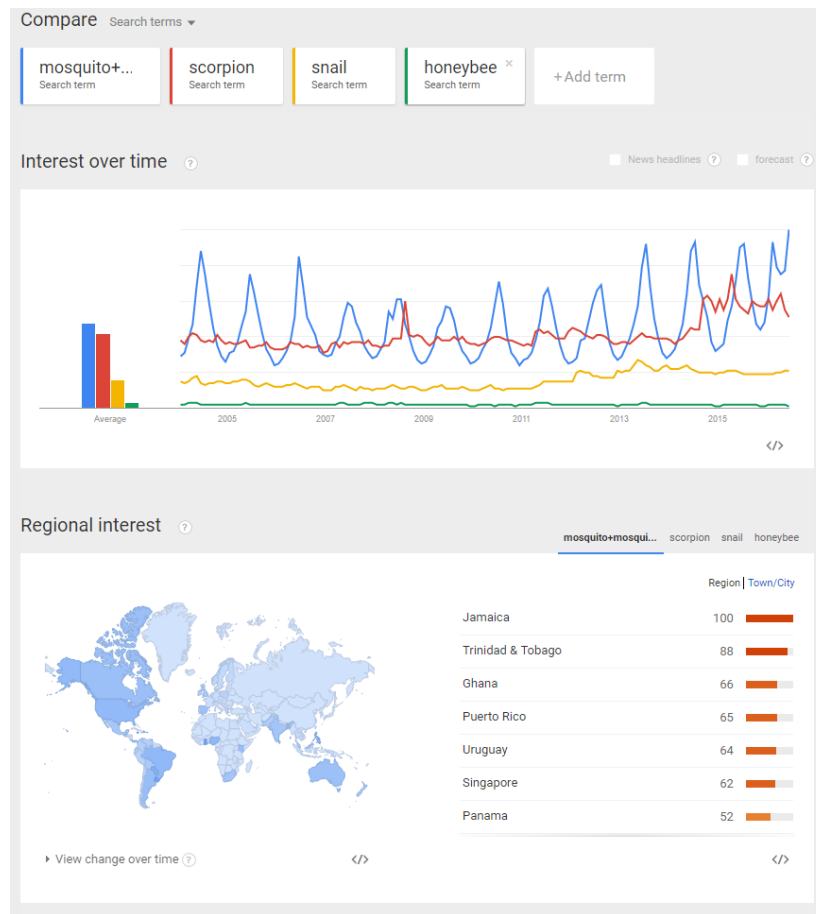
The image is a first design and is expected to function within a range of existing systems. However, should eth committee decide more compatibility is required, variations can be designed relatively quickly for their consideration.

### Expected usage level

I foresee very high usage of this emoji since no current example of a MOSQUITO, or anything similar, exists. As you will know, Zika virus has dominated headlines worldwide in the lead-up to the Rio Olympics because of its impact on foetal development and spread across the Americas and possible transmission to other parts of the world soon. I feel that this would be a timely addition to the emoji communication set. But long before Zika virus, dengue virus, yellow fever virus and a raft of other mosquito-borne causes of human disease have been known and discussed. Mosquito-borne disease affects all of the tropics, subtropics and some region outside this already large human population band. Such disease may increase in frequency and intensity with altered trends in climate as temperatures and rainfall change around the globe, leading to changes in the distribution and behaviour of mosquito species.

From Figure 1 below, it is clear mosquito image use between 2004 and June 2016, follows a seasonality reflecting community and media interest in the seasonally occurring disease outbreaks and epidemics that are spread by mosquitoes around the world. The Spanish/Catalan word for mosquitoes, “mosquitos”/”mosquits” has been included in the search terms for completeness.

The expected usage of mosquito emoji is very high, in part because of the severity and regularity of



**Figure 1.** Google trends data comparing proposed mosquito requests to other current insect emoji, scorpion, snail and honeybee.

### Image distinctiveness

There is nothing similar to this insect emoji currently available and this will be an extremely distinct image. I believe the design is such that it is distinct from its nearest lookalikes, spider or crab. The level of detail at 72x72 pixels retains this distinctiveness.

This represents an insect and not an activity, but could be associated with a CRYING FACE, WORRIED FACE or FACE WITH COLD SWEAT for example to indicate concern about mosquito. In other words, the addition of a mosquito will create many novel combinations that further expand its uptake and usage.

### Frequency requested

I am unclear of whether this emoji has been requested of the consortium in the past

### FACTORS FOR EXCLUSION

#### Overly specific

The proposed character is intended to encompass any and all species of mosquito. Because a mosquito is already a detailed image, it is not considered useful to add any further species-identifying details or colours as such detail would likely not be visible.

This image is therefore not considered to be too specific but representative of all MOSQUITO life. Future variations may seek to drill down into more detail.

### **Open-ended**

This is the only image of its kind offered – there is currently no mosquito image, or image that could be understood or misunderstood to be a mosquito, available as an emoji.

### **Already representable**

There is no other emoji that could represent a mosquito. The nearest similes are the crab, scorpion, ant, spider or satellite but they are all clearly identifiable as such. The proposed mosquito is a unique shape and it could not be represented by a combination of other emoji.

### **Logos, brands, UI icons, signage, specific people, deities**

There is no cross-over with commercial interest, people or deities. A stylised (usually monochrome) mosquito may sometimes used in humours representations or recently, in public health announcements.[2,3,4] The latter is also a reason to create this emoji – to help with public health messaging around mosquito-borne disease and control efforts.

### **Transient**

The use of this emoji is expected to be prolonged not transient, with seasonal upswings, but persisting indefinitely.

### **REFERENCES**

1. <https://www.gatesnotes.com/Health/Most-Lethal-Animal-Mosquito-Week>
2. <http://edition.cnn.com/2014/06/08/travel/denali-road/>
3. <http://www.bugsnbees.com/Mosquito-Crossing-Sign.html>
4. <http://www.swek.wa.gov.au/mosquitoes.aspx>