

Proposal for SLOTH Emoji

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Date: February 27, 2018



Credit: Aphelandra Messer

Abstract

This proposal requests the inclusion of an new animal emoji: SLOTH. The sloth is a cultural touchstone due to its adorable appearance combined with deliberate, slow movements. Though the sloth is widely recognizable, its addition would help to fill-in the largely underrepresented areas of South and Central America in the Unicode emoji character set.

Images



Credit: Aphelandra Messer/Emojination. Free to use in conjunction with this proposal

Introduction

There are two families of sloth — two-toed and three toed sloths — within 6 species that live in the tropical rainforests of South and Central America¹. Generally speaking, Sloth are most widely known due to their unique look and reputation for a certain kind of laziness with slow, deliberate movements. Popular media depictions of sloth include the character "Flash" in the animated movie Zootopia², the cuddly pet sloth in the animated movie The Croods, the prehistoric sloth named "Sid" in the animated movie Ice Age, in addition to countless YouTube videos of sloths doing everything from crossing the street, to lounging in trees or as main protagonist in several memes³. Despite their media attention, neither the sloth nor its attributes are currently expressed with by emojis (at least not in animal form).

Names

CLDR Short Name: SLOTH

¹ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sloth>

² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ONFj7AYgbko>

³ <http://knowyourmeme.com/memes/cultures/sloths>

Selection Factors Inclusion

A. Compatibility

Skype actually includes a SLOTH emoji⁴. In addition, there several sloth sticker apps for iMessage, Snapchat, WeChat and other services.

B. Expected Usage Level

Frequency

Evidence will show that the sloth is a widely loved animal, especially on social media, where Unicode's emojis are heavily used. Facebook has many fan pages for the sloth — such as “sloth conservatorium”⁵, “s l o t h s”⁶, and “sloths lovers”⁷ — with a combined 809,539 of followers. Furthermore the social media platform Instagram includes the hashtags #sloth and #sloths, #slothmeme and #slothmemes, #slothsofinstagram, and #slothlove (to name a few) which have a combined use of 1,027,357 tags⁸ at the time of this proposal.

Compared to another being with qualities similar to a sloth, the snail shows a similar popularity to the sloth on Google Trends from the time period of January 2004 to present. Further, the uptick in popularity for the sloth seen in 2012 (Figure A) is a result of the infamous clip from The Ellen Show when Kristen Bell had what can only be described as a 'sloth meltdown'⁹. Since that time Google Trends for the sloth has stabilized, but evidence from media — such as the movies described earlier — shows steady popularity for the animal.

⁴ <https://www.onmsft.com/news/skype-adds-sloth-emoticon>

⁵ <https://www.facebook.com/SlothConservation/>

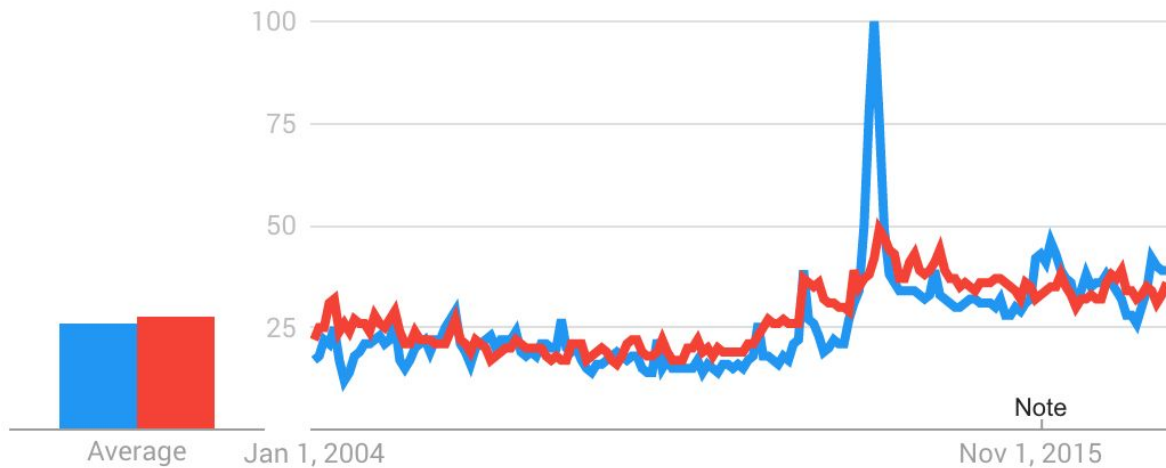
⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/slothdelarebel/>

⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/slothslover/>

⁸ <https://www.instagram.com/explore/tags/sloth/>

⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t5jw3T3Jy70>

● sloth ● snail

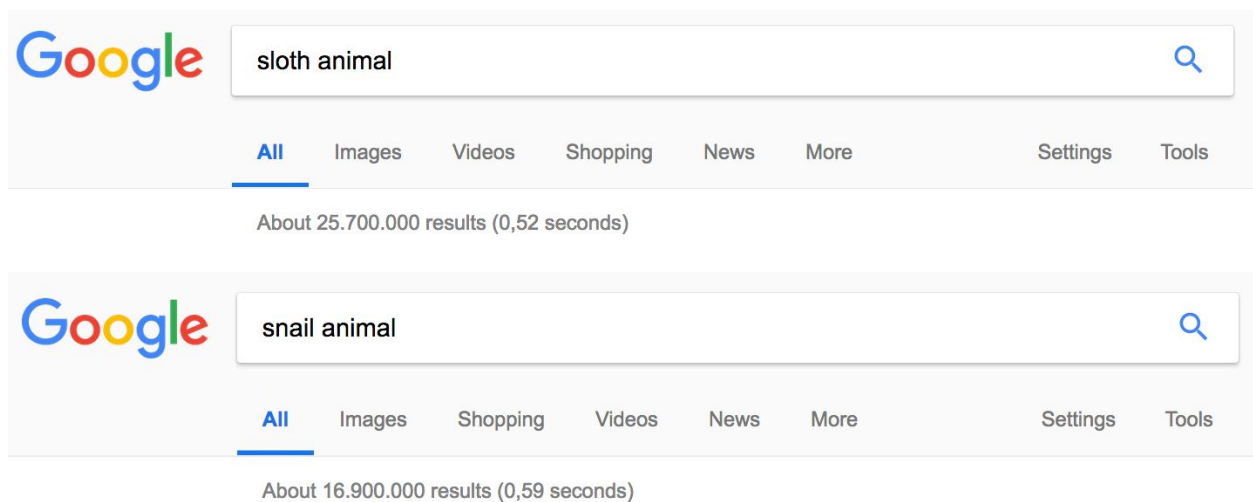


Worldwide. 1/1/04 - 2/6/18. Web Search.



Figure A

Below you will find additional search results in Google Search, Bing and Google Trends image search comparing the sloth with the snail.

Google Search



Bing Search



All

Images

Videos

Maps

News



My saves

3.970.000 Results

Date ▾

Language ▾

Region ▾



All

Images

Videos

Maps

News

My saves




8.070.000 Results

Date ▾




Language ▾

Region ▾

Youtube Search

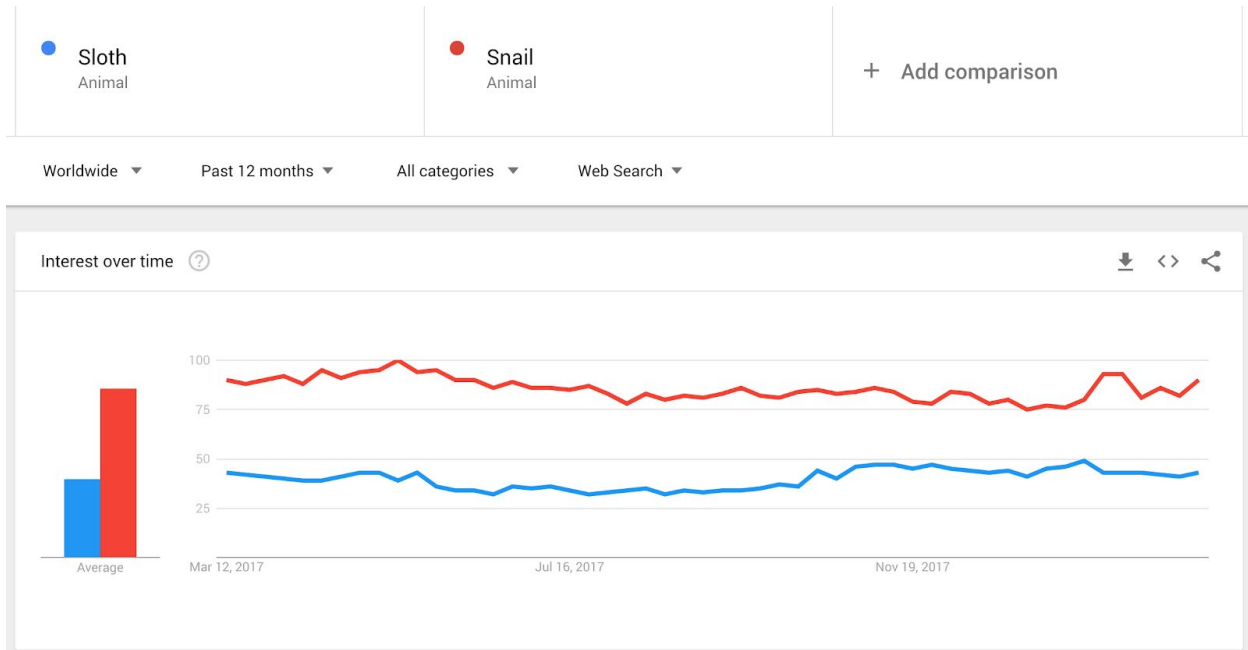


About 924,000 results

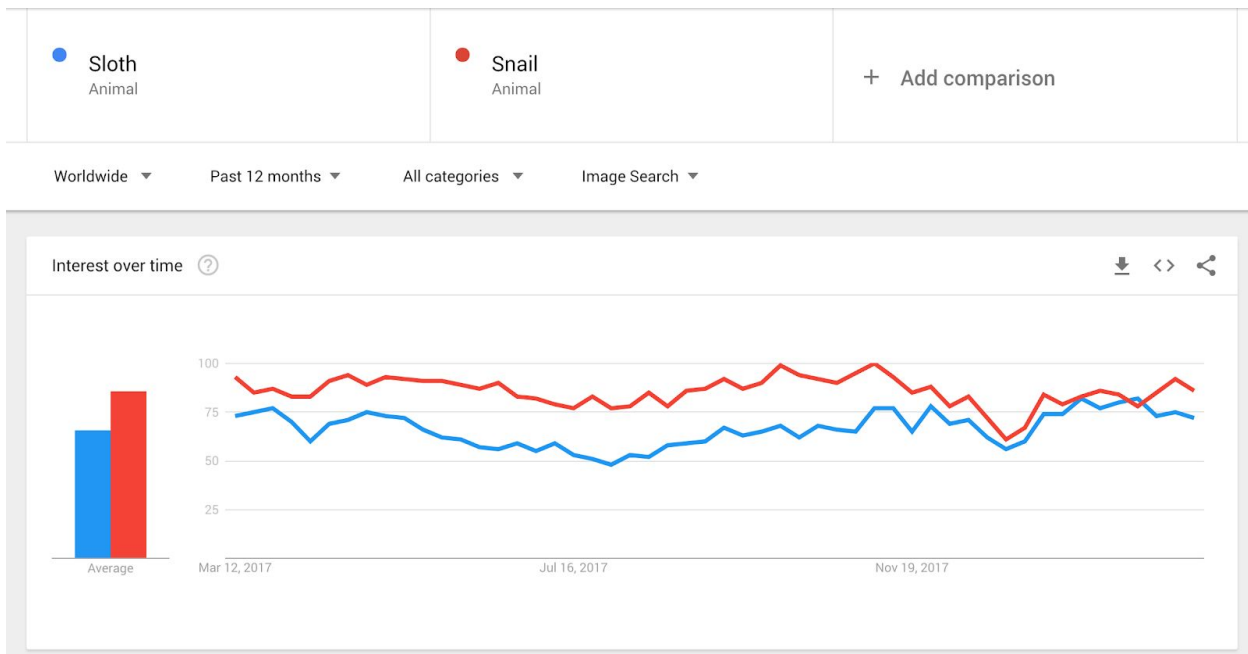


About 812,000 results

Google Trends Web Search (past 12 months)



Google Trends Image Search (past 12 months)



Multiple Usages

A SLOTH emoji has a wide variety of uses, from simply sending a friend something cute — as one might use the panda emoji — to characterizing human characteristics related to attributes of the sloth, such as being tired, lazy, slow and deliberate or late. An additional applications could be to use a sloth emoji as a representation of one of the 7 Deadly Sins of the Christian church, to be used beside the heart emoji (lust), the moneybag emoji (gluttony), money-mouth face (greed), angry face emoji (wrath), face with steam emoji (envy), and the rainbow flag emoji (pride).

If someone doesn't want to join a group to go out to party, that person could answer: "I am in SLOTH mode". Another usage would be to describe a person: "He is a SLOTH". It can also be used as synonym for "slow".

C. Image Distinctiveness

Due to the unique look of the SLOTH it is easily distinguishable from other animals. It is the only animal without wings that hangs from trees with legs facing upwards. The image can depict a SLOTH hanging from a tree including a branch to highlight this feature. Alternatively it can be shown without a branch and crawling on the ground.

One note, vendors will have to decide if they want to show the SLOTH with or without a tree branch. We do not have a strong stance on this.

D. Completeness

The SLOTH emoji will join the llama emoji as a representative of South America, and hopefully more will follow.

E. Frequently requested

The SLOTH is one of the top 5 most requested animal emojis on Emojipedia¹⁰. The demand for the sloth can also be seen on Twitter¹¹, with the following examples:

- @Apple can we pretty please have a sloth emoji soon? ❤️
- Dear emoji creator, when shall we have a sloth emoji? Thank you.
- Low key upset that @Apple has no sloth emoji, but has a little rat and porcupine. I just want a sloth. #BringSlothEmojis2018
- @unicode make a moose and sloth emoji please 😊

¹⁰ <https://blog.emojipedia.org/top-emoji-requests-2017/>

¹¹ <https://twitter.com/search?f=tweets&vertical=default&q=sloth%20emoji>

Additionally there are several independent petitions on change.me¹² to introduce a SLOTH emoji.

Selection Factors Exclusion

F. Overly Specific

The sloth emoji is not overly specific, as it is a distinct category of animal. We propose a single emoji for all six species of sloth.

G. Open Ended

We are filling in the set of animals, and this animal specifically helps bolster Central and South American charismatic megafauna, which are currently underrepresented relative to their African peers. Due to the look, behaviour and characteristics the sloth is unique animal without any comparable peer around the world.

H. Already Representable

Currently there is no way to represent the SLOTH itself or the characteristics of the SLOTH. The snail emoji (🐌) or the turtle (🐢) come close, but both are mostly seen as slow, not as lazy. Further, the snail and the turtle are not within the category of “cuddly” or “cute” or “soft” animals, thus solidly placing the sloth into its own, underrepresented category of animals.

The SLOTH is also part of a very underrepresented group of animals. It would be a nice addition next to the LLAMA to extend the south american animal family in the Unicode set.

I. Logos, brands, UI icons, signage, specific people, deities

SLOTH are an ancient species that can't be trademarked, and the image of the sloth is not currently being used to represent a copy or trademark.

J. Transient

Some families of the sloth are critically endangered, but this doesn't hurt the interest in sloths in general. It is a well loved animal around the world and can be found in zoos everywhere. There are also lots of organizations trying to help the sloth population in South and Central America, for example the Sloth Institute of Costa Rica¹³ or the Sloth Conservation Foundation¹⁴.

¹² <https://www.change.org/p/apple-sloth-emoji-f02993b7-7f55-4a1b-8902-173dcb92bf10>

¹³ <http://www.theslothinstituteofcostarica.org>

¹⁴ <http://slothconservation.com/>

K. Faulty Comparison

The unique look of the sloth makes it difficult to mistake — especially when upside down, as depicted here — with other animals represented by Unicode.

Sort location

- animal-mammal
- After bat and before wolf face.

Other Information

(optional)

Character Properties

The other character properties are suggested to be defined as follows.

General Category: So

Canonical Combining Class: 0

Bidirectional Class: ON

Decomposition Type: Decomposition Mapping:

Numeric Type:

Numeric Value:

Bidirectional Mirrored: N Unicode 1 Name:

ISO Comment:

Simple Uppercase Mapping: Simple Lowercase Mapping: Simple Titlecase Mapping:

Author Bios

Bodo Tasche (bodo@tasche.me) is a Software Developer at a mobile gaming company in Berlin. In the end of 2016 he realized that the only way to prevent burnout is to be like a sloth. Take your time and do not try to hurry things. That led to a half year sabbatical and an annual ticket for the Berlin zoo.

Kelly Blanchat (kelly.blanchat@gmail.com) is an academic librarian in New Haven, Connecticut. She uses concepts from social media to teach students about information retrieval and being socially conscious information creators. On the weekends she is an amateur runner and designer, and pizza connoisseur.

Jennifer 8. Lee (jenny@emojicon.co) is the founder of Emojination, whose motto is emoji by the people for the people. And she only lightly cleaned up this very solid proposal.