

Orangutan Emoji Submission

By Charlotte Bushnell-Boates

March 25, 2018

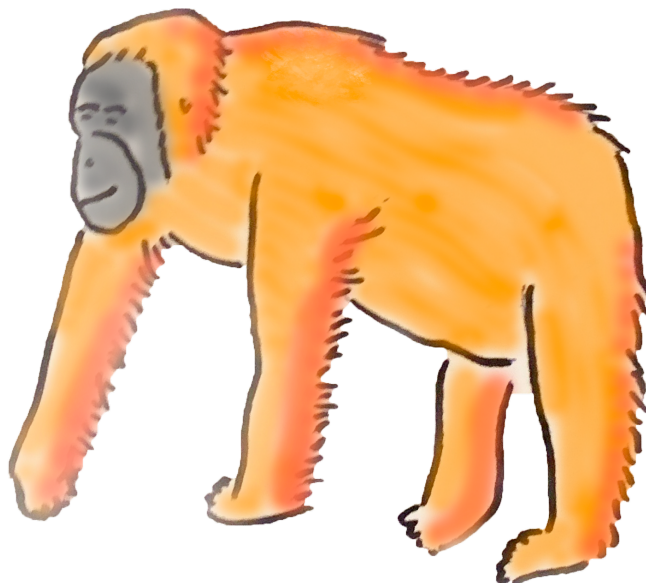


Image Credit: Charlotte Bushnell-Boates / available under a [CC0 Public Domain Dedication](#)¹

ABSTRACT

This proposal is to request inclusion of a new emoji as a Unicode character: ORANGUTAN emoji. Orangutans are a visually distinct species and one of the most closely related to human beings. This proposal represents an opportunity to broaden the set of Animal emojis by including a influential and unique member of the animal kingdom.

INTRODUCTION

This proposal is to request inclusion of a new emoji as Unicode character: ORANGUTAN emoji.

Orangutans are highly intelligent primates, residing in Malaysia, Borneo and Indonesia. Importantly, they're one of the animals most related to us as human beings. Orangutans share a large portion of their DNA with humans and recent evidence suggests that they are [our closest relatives](#), as orangutans share the highest number of physical traits (28 distinct features) with humans. Thus, orangutans clearly hold a unique place in the animal kingdom, and one that is highly relevant to us as *homo sapiens sapiens*.

¹ This proposer, Charlotte Bushnell-Boates, created this image for the purpose of this emoji proposal.

With their vibrant orange hair and distinct body type, the orangutan is an aesthetically interesting animal. Other significant primates are already represented in Unicode (e.g. Monkey, Gorilla), and the inclusion of orangutan would help to complete the set. As orangutans are a visually distinct creature, they can't accurately or elegantly be represented by any emoji currently in the Animals section.

It's worth noting that orangutans are currently a threatened group. Both Sumatran and Bornean species are critically endangered, according to [the IUCN Red List of mammals](#). The IUCN estimates the current population to decrease by more than 50% by 2025.

Thus, an orangutan emoji could serve several functions; one, to highlight one of humanity's closest animal relatives, second, to complete the set of emoji primates, and third, to raise awareness of the risk of orangutan extinction and to emphasize the conservation movement.

NAMES

CLDR Short Name

Orangutan

CLDR Keywords

Primate, monkey, mammal

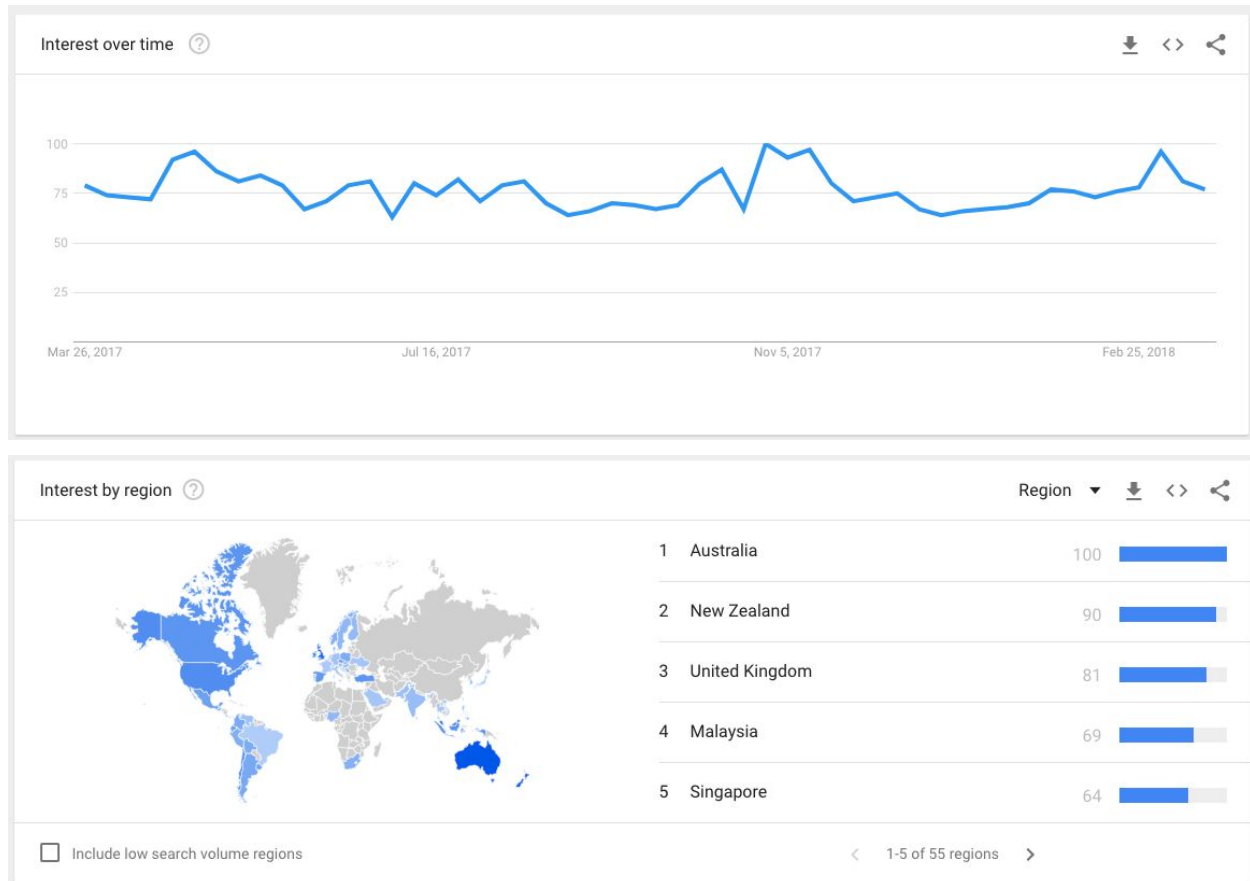
SELECTION FACTORS INCLUSION

Compatibility

This is a new emoji for inclusion in Unicode and then other systems. It will contribute to various phrases and usages as defined below.

| | |
|---|----------------------|
| <div><div></div><div>orangutan</div><div>Search term</div></div> | <div>+ Compare</div> |
| <div>Worldwide ▼ Past 12 months ▼ All categories ▼ Web Search ▼</div> | |

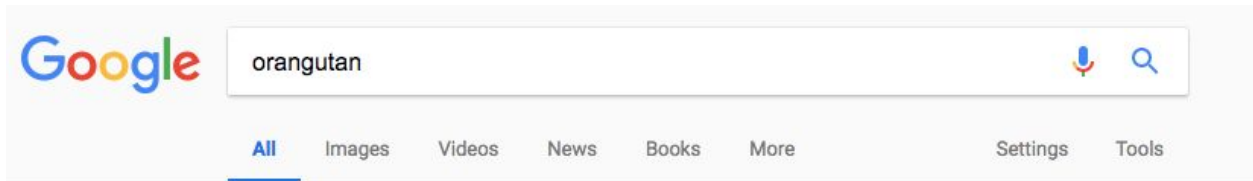
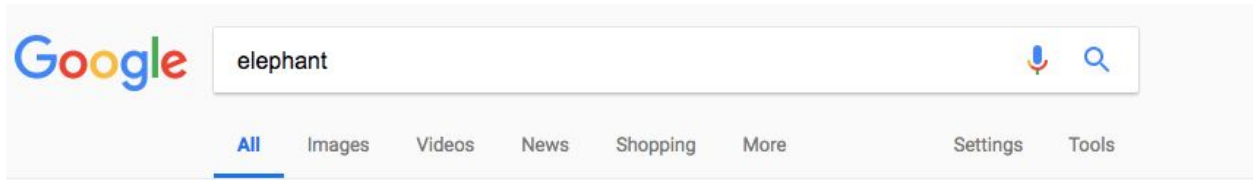
Expected Usage Level



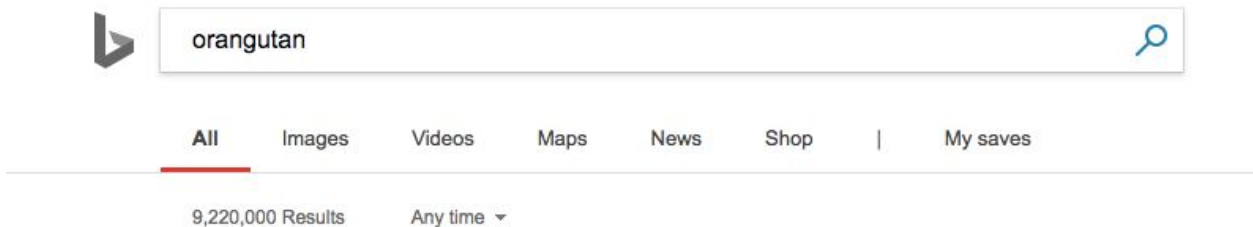
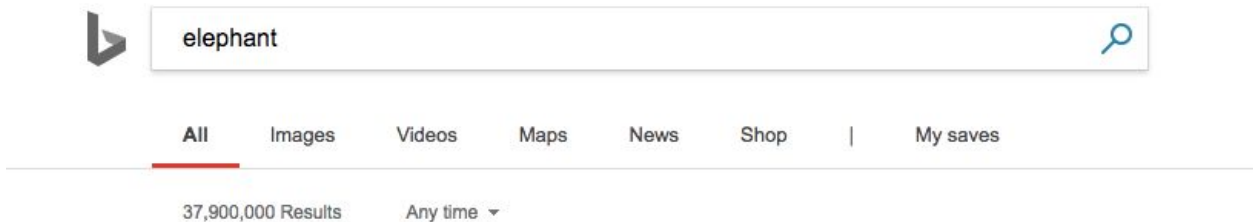
Interest in orangutans has remained steady over time. Most individuals interested in searching for orangutans reside in countries in or near where orangutans live (Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, Singapore), with particular interest in the United Kingdom and North America, as well.

The results for “orangutan” compared to “elephant” across are as follows:

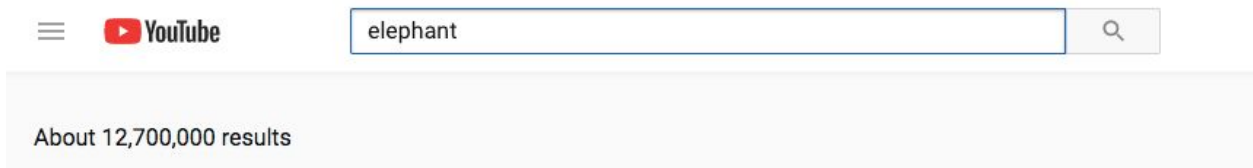
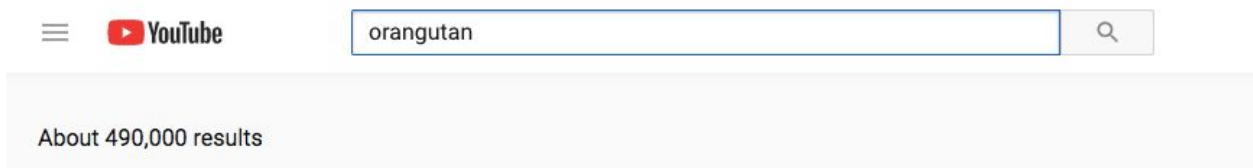
Google Web Search:



Bing:



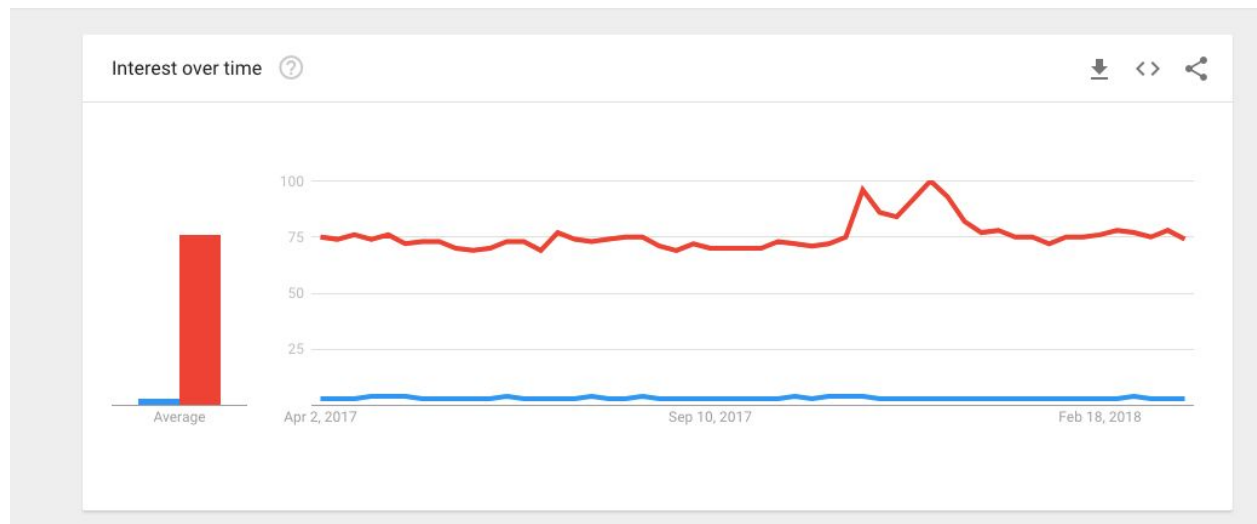
YouTube:



Google Trends (Web Search):

| | | |
|--|--|------------------|
| ● orangutan <small>Search term</small> | ● elephant <small>Search term</small> | + Add comparison |
|--|--|------------------|

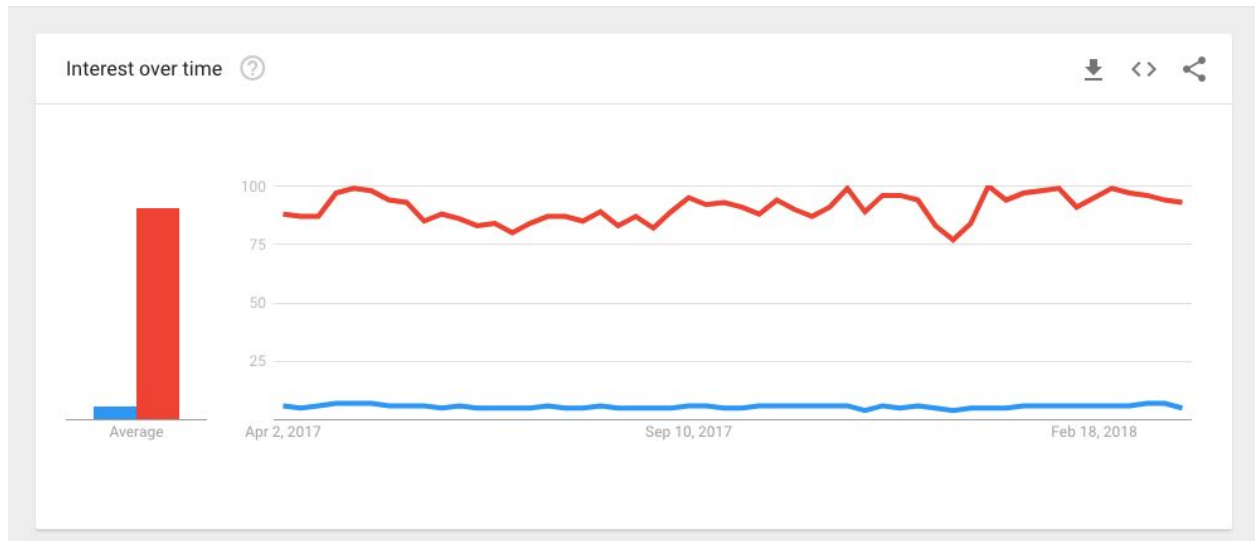
Worldwide ▼ Past 12 months ▼ All categories ▼ Web Search ▼



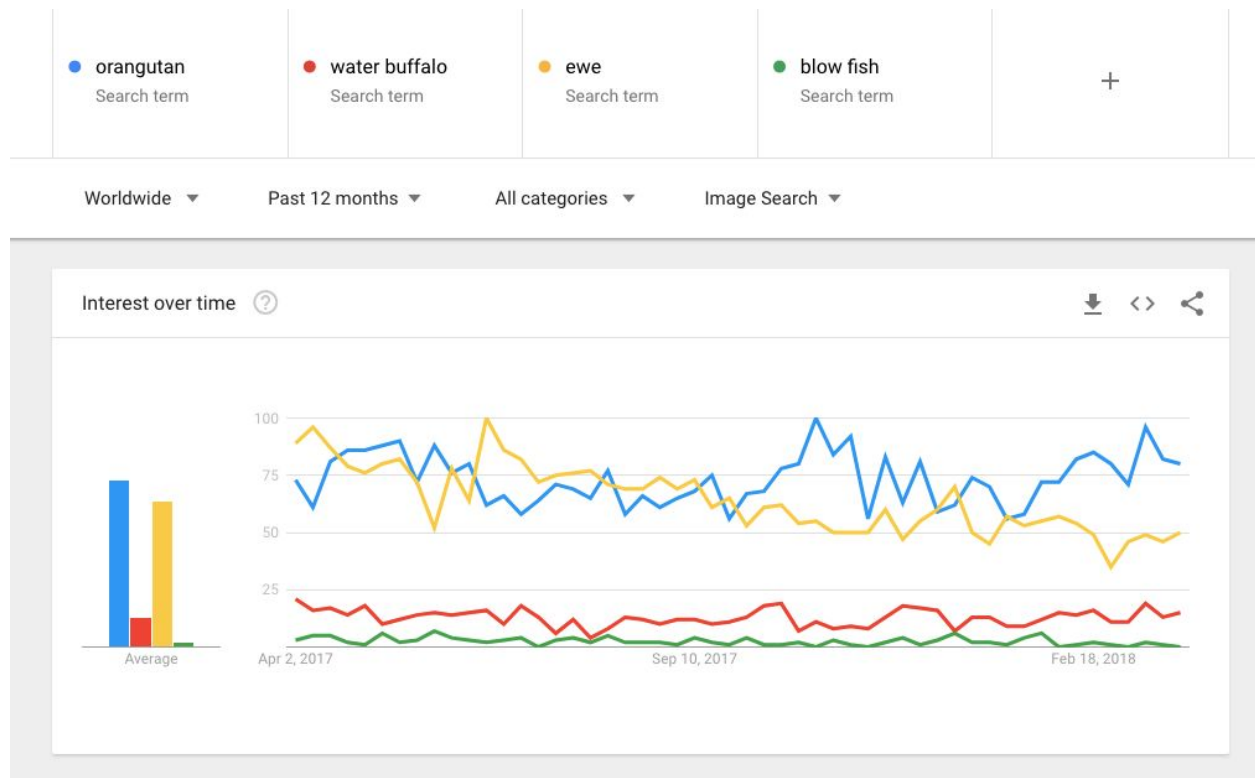
Google Trends (Image Search):

| | | |
|--|--|------------------|
| ● orangutan <small>Search term</small> | ● elephant <small>Search term</small> | + Add comparison |
|--|--|------------------|

Worldwide ▼ Past 12 months ▼ All categories ▼ Image Search ▼



While the orangutan does not fare well against the universally-popular elephant, it is a popular search term on Google Trends (Web Search) compared to other existing emoji in the Animals section.



Additionally, though individuals may not be searching for orangutans on YouTube, Bing or Google in comparatively high numbers, this proposer nevertheless argues that due to their distinct visual nature they would be used if made available. As seen below, people are using the exact terms “orangutan emoji,” which acts as further evidence.

Multiple Usages

- Literal reference to the orangutan primate
- Use alongside the Gorilla and Monkey emoji to reference primates/primatology
- Reference to endangered animals and the broader conservation movement
- Comical reference to someone who has overdone his/her tan
- Multiple popular cultural references, including King Louie from Disney’s *The Jungle Book*, Jupiter from Jules Verne’s *The Mysterious Island*. Orangutans have also played a role in *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*, *Futurama*, *The Rise of the Planet of the Apes*, and more.

Use in Sequences

The orangutan emoji is a singular emoji and will work effectively by itself (i.e. it does not need any ZWJ modifiers).

IMAGE DISTINCTIVENESS

The orangutan emoji is a distinctive visual symbol, which will likely be recognizable by virtually any owner of a smartphone.

COMPLETENESS

This will continue to build out mammals and primates in the Animals part of emoji. It is not a direct part of a series such as Zodiac symbols, but it does belong with the other primate emoji (Gorilla, Monkey, Monkey Face). As such, an orangutan emoji would help complete the sub-category of Animals that humans can most directly relate to and are also a member of — primates.

FREQUENTLY REQUESTED

The orangutan emoji is frequently requested on social media websites, such as Twitter. As is evidenced in the samples below, many emoji users feel that the sequence of primates represented on emoji is not complete without an orangutan emoji. Additionally, many individuals and organizations feel that an orangutan emoji would positively benefit the orangutan conservation movement. Many users on Twitter and other websites have resorted to inelegant combinations of other emoji as a substitute.



Jennie @HiJennwa · 14 Sep 2016

almost all of my discussion posts are centered or mention **orangutans**, is there an **orangutan emoji** yet?



emiko @appledad_ · 12 Oct 2017

regularly regretting not pursuing primatology in my anthropology career because 🐒***orangutan emoji** here*



Ryan A. Boone @BooneBurn · 25 May 2017

i wish there was an **orangutan emoji** 🐒🍊



jboy @emmalu_wagner · 17 Aug 2017

earlier today I saw a video of an **orangutan** and they used a monkey **emoji** and I'm still offended by that



Rebecca_Reeder @Rebecca__Reeder · 17 Jul 2017

@tim_cook Please create an **orangutan emoji**. There is a monkey one and a gorilla one, but no **orangutan**.



Rebecca_Reeder @Rebecca__Reeder · 17 Jul 2017

#WorldEmojiDay We need an **orangutan emoji**

🌐 Translate from Indonesian





Krista Orangutan @orangutan2 · 17 Jul 2017

Someone help us submit for **orangutan emoji**. Monkey and gorilla have one. unicode.org/emoji/selectio...



Patty Shenker @Pattyshenker

#WorldEmojiDay Where is the #Orangutan emoji? Please make one. They need attention as they r highly endangered like too many others



1



2



3



Sean Bell @shonbell · 28 Jul 2017

Where is the **orangutan emoji**?



1



COUNTERARGUMENTS TO FACTORS FOR EXCLUSION

Overly Specific

The proposed orangutan emoji is recognizable, relevant and not overly specific. Orangutans are no more specific than other emoji that have been included in the Animals section, such as Water Buffalo, Gorilla, Two-Hump Camel, Camel, and others.

Open Ended

The orangutan is not just one of many items within a set; it is distinct and does not open up a direct open-ended set of related symbols.

Already Representable

The orangutan cannot currently be represented by existing emoji. The closest option to an orangutan emoji would be to use the Gorilla emoji (🐼) and the Tangerine emoji (🍊). This option is inaccurate, and also unclear whether it is simply used to refer to a gorilla eating a tangerine (e.g. written text is still required to give context).

Simply using the Gorilla or Monkey emoji to represent the orangutan would be factually incorrect, as they are all physically distinct species.

Transient

Orangutans are not a transient symbol, and existed on Earth for millions of years before humans evolved into *homo sapiens sapiens*.

The only risk of the orangutan becoming a transient symbol is if the species becomes extinct at a future date. Note that one of the primary arguments for having an orangutan emoji is to raise awareness to help prevent this extinction from occurring.

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

The orangutan has a few coincidental similarities, yet they are largely for non-profit organizations related to the orangutan conservation movement.

While there may be some not-yet-identified associations with the orangutan emoji, the proposed emoji is unlikely to be associated with any particular stigma or brand.

Faulty comparison

The submission for the orangutan emoji is one made primarily on its own merits (e.g. importance as an animal); in line with the Unicode selection factors for inclusion (above) and that it avoids the factors for exclusion (also above).

SORT LOCATION

The proposer suggests that the orangutan emoji be added as a full-bodied, side-facing emoji in the Animals category. A logical placement would be near the Gorilla emoji.

Proposer:

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