

YOUR WEEKLY BULLETIN OF WIT AND WONDER



THE BABE DIGS YOU

Meet the prettiest Malarial vector ever.



IT'S NO JOKE, GUYS

How sexist banter landed a courier firm in tribunal.



HOW RUDE

Companies House tells near the knuckle namers where to go.

BITE ME, BEAUTIFUL!

If someone came over and bit your arm, wouldn't it be slightly better if they were a supermodel?

Obviously, if they were ripping out great chunks of your flesh with their teeth it wouldn't make much difference how gorgeous they were.

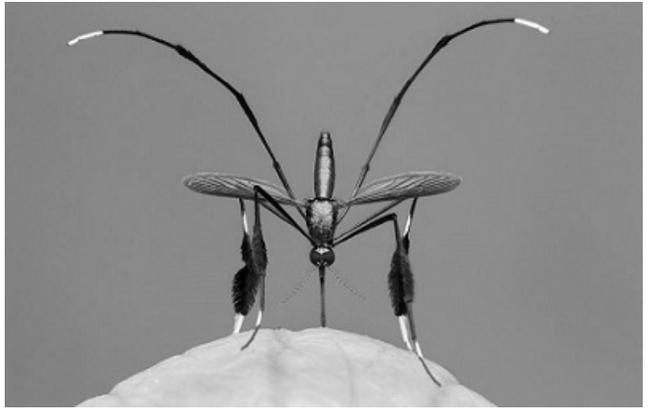
But if it was just a quick nip, which you barely even noticed at the time, you could, once the itching set in, at least look back on the incident a little more fondly if they were just stunningly lovely to look at.

I say this only because the most beautiful mosquito in the world is featured this week on [BBC Online](#) (where you can see the mosquito in all her wonderful colours).

Hey... did you happen to see the most beautiful mosquito in the world...?

And if you did, was she biting..?

This will mean nothing to anyone who didn't live through the 70s (sigh).



No, really, this mozzie is a stunner and speaking as someone with Type O blood - the preferred beverage of mosquitoes the world over - having *this* highly ornamental Sabethes variety stick a sharpened proboscis in my upper dermal layers *would* take the sting out of it a bit. Just look at her!

The photo was taken by Gil Wizen from Ontario and is a runner up for Wildlife Photographer of the Year. It might be the iridescent titanium shimmer or the fantastic furry purple trousers, but that Sabethes chick is the embodiment of what Charlie Rich was singing about in 1974.

We're not likely to get a supermodel dropping in to suck our blood, though. Mainly because this exotic species is found in South America. We have 30 quite unsexy varieties of our own here in the UK, though, and they do have a thing for Blood Type O - it's official - and *breathing*.

Yes. They are attracted by your breath and I have a theory that, unlike some other vampires, they actually *like* garlic. At least that's a pattern I've noticed...

So enjoy your late season barbecues and just remember not to breathe...

SHORT SKIRT SHRIFT

And speaking of unpleasant bites brings me to the case of *Mrs S Stannard v Overseas Courier Service (London) Limited* 2021 and how bantering in the office can end in tribunal if not nipped in the bud.

Mrs Stannard worked for the company as a National Sales Manager until her resignation in August 2018. She claimed a "sexist culture" existed at the company,

EVENTS SEASON
2021

SEP 22

and that inappropriate and sexualised comments were regularly directed at her and other female members of staff. Colleagues made many comments regarding her body and outfits including: "You always wear short skirts to get the business!", and "Why not use your best skills - your legs?".

When she was pregnant, comments were also made about the size of her breasts such as that she was "bursting out of [her] shirt". The Employment Tribunal (ET) was satisfied that the company "tolerated sexist and offensive comments by men directed at women, seeing such conduct as banter".

In 2017, Mrs Stannard suffered a slipped disk. She was on sick leave for three weeks and when she returned she alleged there was a "step change" in the way she was treated. Her work came under increased scrutiny and one of the directors claimed she was not working enough hours. Both directors of the company asked Mrs Stannard when she planned to retire, with one of the directors commenting that her husband "earns well". The ET found that such a comment "would not have been made to a man" and was "intricately connected to her status as a wife and mother".

Mrs Stannard raised a grievance in 2018 after coming to the belief that the newly appointed head of e-commerce was encroaching on her duties and had in fact been hired to replace her. Unsatisfied by the outcome of her grievance and subsequent appeal, Mrs Stannard filed a claim against the company for direct sex discrimination and harassment and unfair constructive dismissal.

The ET found that the inappropriate comments made to Mrs Stannard about her appearance were directed at her because she was a woman. Judge Gumbiti-Zimuto wrote that "the comments are at times insulting, other times lascivious, other times attempts at humour but always demeaning and unwanted". Such comments amounted to unfavourable treatment of Mrs Stannard based on her sex, and had the purpose or effect of violating her dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Her claims for direct sex discrimination and harassment and for harassment related to sex therefore succeeded.

Mrs Stannard also succeeded in her claim for unfair constructive dismissal with the ET concluding that the company had committed a repudiatory breach of contract. In reaching this decision, the ET considered the company's sexist culture and reasoned that the comments made about Mrs Stannard retiring "were not treating her respectfully and with trust and confidence". The ET was also critical of the company's inadequate handling of Mrs Stannard's grievance appeal.

This case shows how a sexist workplace culture that is allowed to continue unchecked can be costly to employers. Employers should pay attention to the tone of conversations among employees, and not be too quick to dismiss certain comments as "banter". Employees should have clear avenues to report behaviour that makes them uncomfortable, and any allegations of harassment should be taken seriously.

Peace of Mind Members Seminar - Solent Hotel

SEP 28
Peace of Mind Members Seminar - Virtual Event

OCT 12
Employment Law Masterclass - Settlement Agreements

OCT 20
HR Hangout - Creating a Diversity and Inclusion agenda



WE'RE NAMING NAMES



As a company name, Warner Goodman may not rock your world, but it's got a nice warm, steady kind of reassurance to it, I'd say.

At least it's not Legally McLegalFace or Just Solicit Us... or something ruder.

Over the past two years more than 800 company names have been rejected for being stupid and/or offensive by Companies House. Maybe it's the *sort* of two years we've just been through, but there have been some corkers.

According to a report out online this week, the list of rejects includes:

The Building That Fought Hitler Ltd
Cambridge Cannabis Club Ltd
Fancy A Bomb Ltd
Fit As A Fork Ltd
Pandemic19 Ltd
Go Fudge Yourself Ltd

I'd like to invite you to share your own offensive company name ideas on our Facebook page...but something's telling me I'd best not...

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... And after liking us on Facebook, why not follow us on Twitter?



Sarah Whitmore
Partner
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Howard Robson
Partner
023 8071 7718



Emma Kemp
Associate Solicitor
023 8071 7486



Natalie Rawson
Associate Solicitor
023 8071 7403



Louise Bodeker
Solicitor
023 8071 7448

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