



# BUGGER OFF

Mosquitoes bite and are as annoying as your mother-in-law — Luckily Giselle Whiteaker has a solution on how to zap the former. You may just be stuck with the latter

MOSQUITOES. WHAT ARE THEY GOOD for? Scientists suggest that mosquitoes are one of the few species that would have little impact on the global environment if they became extinct. There are no predators relying on mosquitoes, and no essential role that they fill. So let's do it. Let's wipe them out of existence.

There are over 2,700 species of mosquito in the world, so making them extinct is a challenge. They may be small in size but the hum of the mosquito's wings — beating about 1,000 times a second — has to be one of the most annoying sounds in the universe. It's up there with car alarms, dentist drills and vuvuzelas.

They are also major disease carriers. From malaria to encephalitis, dengue and yellow fever, mosquitoes are said to be directly responsible for over two million deaths annually. They are vector agents, so they don't even suffer from the disease themselves — they just pass the parcel.

It's only the women that bite, although in reality mosquitoes don't have jaws. Technically it's more of a prick than a bite. The proboscis extending from the mozzies' head has six needle-like stylets that stab through the skin turning the proboscis into a straw that taps into the bloodstream. If that's not enough, consider that mosquito