



Hello to all my wonderful friends at Braintree Scientific!

How are things in beautiful Braintree? You'll never guess where I am now, but here's a hint: it's sunny, scenic, and filled with heroes! That's right – I am officially writing to you from the real minefields in Mozambique, and there are so many things to tell you that I don't think my paws can tell them fast enough!

Time flies when you're a hardworking hero like me, and since I wrote to you last, I passed my final blind test at HeroRAT headquarters in Tanzania. Before you could say "banana" myself and 19 other graduRATs packed our bags and boarded a plane to Mozambique! We had a comfortable flight (even though we work with our noses close to the ground, we are excellent fliers!) and it was great to see all the familiar faces waiting for us at the other end of our journey.

Right now the other rookies and I are getting some rest and relaxation as we acclimatize to our new home. There's a lot to take in! For one thing, the dirt smells (and feels) different, and we have to adjust to new, distracting scents. For another thing, it's quite hot here – even hotter than Tanzania!



The Sniffles express: this is my transport cage, complete with a bed of peanuts and tomato treats to keep me hydrated during the journey. Time to fly!

Still, I look forward to training every morning, because it brings me even closer to my final, ultimate test: official accreditation by the National Institute of Demining here in Mozambique. Passing this last step and becoming a full-fledged HeroRAT has been my dream since I was a tiny pup! The other rats have given me a lot of tips as I practice my indications, and although I miss Miraji, the trainers here are very encouraging. (Plus, rumor has it, Miraji will be joining the team in Mozambique soon too – so I will be excited to be reunited with my lifelong friend and teacher!)

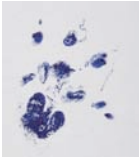
There was one thing that I didn't think I would have to acclimatize to when I arrived in Mozambique – glamour! But just a few weeks ago, we heroes were honored with a visit from APOPO's Honorary President of the Board, Her Royal Highness Princess Astrid of Belgium. We were all nervous about meeting royalty, but the Princess was very kind and interested in our work – she tried on the heavy demining gear and even stopped by to watch us HeroRATs in action. Don't tell the veterans, but I think

she was particularly impressed with the speedy sniffing skills of us, the newest graduates from our hero training program in Tanzania!

Well, it's getting late in the morning and the sun is hot – about time for me to hit the clay pots and get some rest before tomorrow's training session! Hero-sized thanks, as always, for your incredible support – you know I couldn't do it without you.

Wish me luck in my final accreditation test to be come an 'official' Mine Detection Rat (MDR), as they call us heroes in the field. I'll let you know how it goes!

Love & sniffs,



Sniffles the HeroRAT

P.S. HeroRATs have a new home online! Be sure to check out the new APOPO website: www.apopo.org.