

## Animals with Amazing Abilities

Most people have mixed feelings about rats and avoid them if they can. Bart Weetjens thinks that we must treat rats as \_\_\_\_\_.

Bart started an organisation called APOPO in Tanzania. Bart's organisation trains African giant pouched rats to \_\_\_\_\_ the ground in order to find underground landmines left in the area during past wars. Many of these \_\_\_\_\_ are still active. They often explode, killing and \_\_\_\_\_ thousands of people each year. Villagers avoid places where the dangerous landmines are. But much of this land could be used as \_\_\_\_\_ farmland if the mines weren't there. These rats are helping villagers get their land back.

The giant rats are never \_\_\_\_\_. None of them die doing their work. They even have \_\_\_\_\_ put on their ears and tails while they work. And when they find a landmine, they get a treat!

While rats aren't usually seen as heroes, some \_\_\_\_\_ animals, like dogs, often are. There are many stories about dogs that save lives, but dogs have another lifesaving skill that we're still learning about. Just like landmine-sniffing rats, dogs have an amazing sense of smell. They're now being \_\_\_\_\_ to sniff out \_\_\_\_\_ from the body that are connected to certain diseases, sometimes even before doctors or laboratory tests can find them!

So, the next time you see a rat or dog, don't be afraid. Remember, these animal heroes can save lives.



A medical dog sniffing for diseases

sunblock   sniff   injuring   mistreated   landmines   chemicals   heroes  
trained   domestic   valuable