



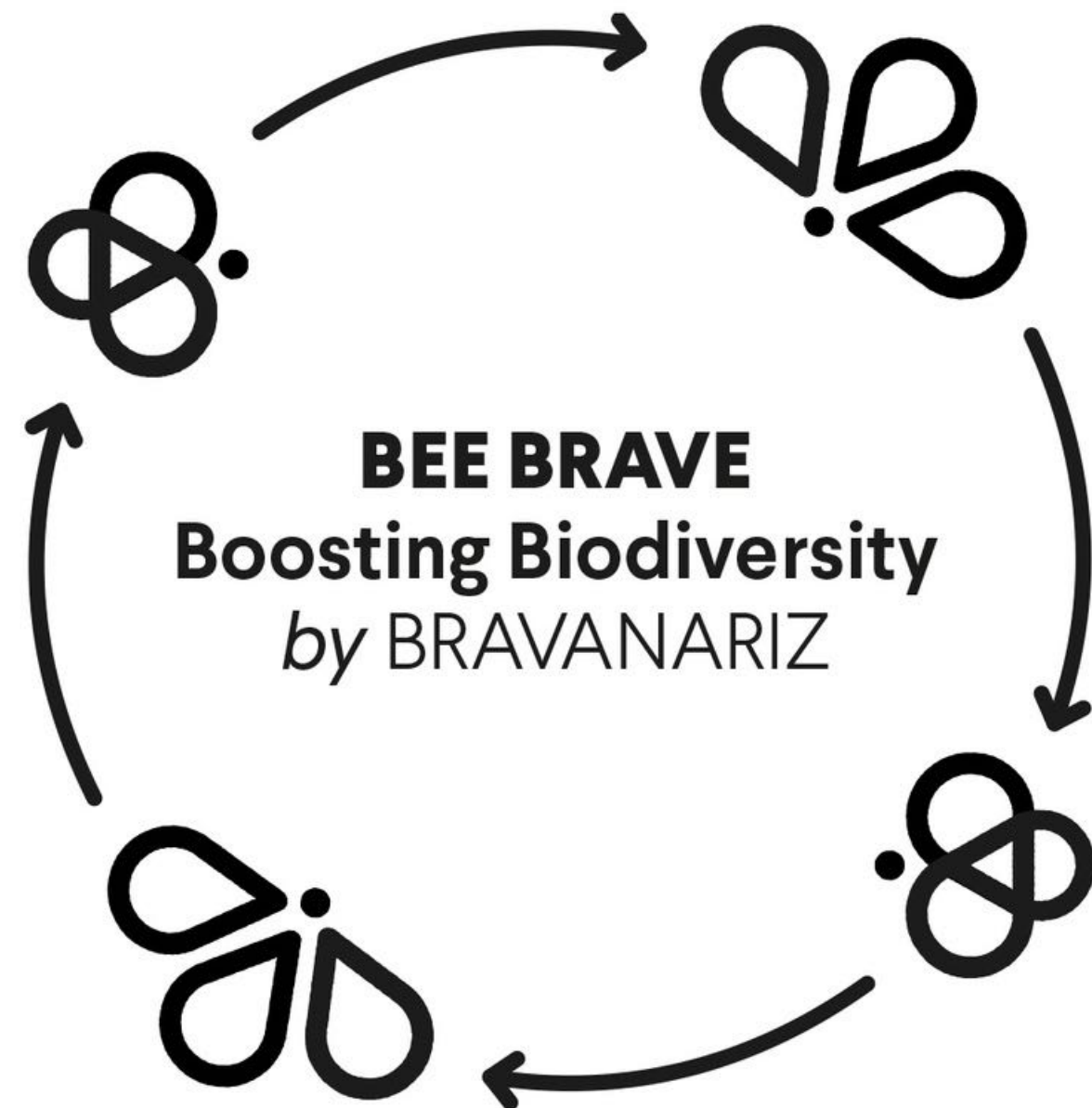
Bee Brave

Boosting Biodiversity
by BRAVANARIZ



BEE BRAVE is not a product or a service. It is an umbrella project open to any type of actions that enhance the biodiversity of our natural environment. It is created and led by BRAVANARIZ, which is financing part of the project and fostering collaboration between diverse actors, including farm owners, beekeepers, scientists, academics, landscape protection associations, and governmental organizations.





The Pollination Cycle

There are flowers, and then there are bees. And if there are more bees, there will be more flowers, and thus more bees. This, for thousands of years, has been one of nature's most beautiful feedback cycles. However, excessive human ambition is changing this equilibrium and breaking the cycle.

BEE BRAVE wants to restore this cycle, at least at the local level, focusing on two parts of the equation: the bees and their habitat

"The idea is simple: give a bit back to the landscape that gives us so much. It is a gesture of gratitude and humility. While the landscape does not need us to be what it is, the landscape builds us and shapes us much more than we want to recognize. We owe a lot to our natural environment. Being aware of that is already a great and important first step. BEE BRAVE is Bravanariz's humble way of going one step further."

Ernesto Collado - CEO & Founder





Collaborating for Mutual Benefit

In the struggle for the conservation of our natural spaces, there are many possible courses of action, all of vital importance. Parks and nature reserves, as well as virgin forests, have fascinating beauty and are the most well-known. However, there are intermediate spaces, not so eye-catching, where man and nature have interacted for millennia in harmony, contributing things to each other. Also, let us not forget that we too are nature.

We talk less about these intermediate spaces because they are more uncomfortable. We like to simplify, to create borders. But these lines are blurred in a space of coexistence. Such coexistence is difficult, rich in nuances, and deliciously complex.

At Bravanariz, we believe that there is more work to be done in these intermediate spaces, in which a relationship of mutual collaboration, much more just and empathic between man and his environment, is best exemplified.

We know what we are talking about. We are wild harvesters, just like our partners, the bees. We work and share the same sources.

BEE BRAVE aims to enhance the biodiversity of our landscapes without excluding us, the humans, and our activities. This is where our two vectors of action, bees and prats de dall, are of paramount importance. They are part of this zone of collaboration between species, which, if done in a balanced and respectful way, benefits everyone, and thus, the entire planet.



Restoring the Prats de Dall

Prats de dall (mowing meadows in english) are semi-natural habitats, maintained by non-intensive seasonal grazing or an annual harvest, usually associated with ponds. These meadows are especially valuable when they form part of a mosaic with other habitats, such as forests, rivers, ponds, and brooks.

They:

- are rich in biodiversity and ideal for pollinators.
- are rich in cover crops,
- provide a healthy environment that is full of resources to bees.
- add diversity to the landscape.
- are a natural barrier against fires, which impoverish botanical diversity.





Field work

BRAVANARIZ has been doing field work for years to identify old prats de dall, in the Alt Empordà, that can be recovered for their original use. We :

1. Contact prats de dall owners to explain that they are at risk.
2. Study and take a census of the diversity of flora and fauna of the place, to determine the health and state of the Prat de Dall
3. Educate the owners on these spaces of biodiversity.
4. Encourage them to join our project, which combines the recovery, management, and care of the prats de dall with the placement of ecologically managed bee hives.



Can Bech, the pilot project

Near Agullana (Alt Empordà), almost near the French border, in the Les Salines Mountains, we found an abandoned Prat de Dall, now covered with poplar trees. The presence of these trees caught our attention, since they usually need humid soils. The first botanical studies made by Joan Font (a biology professor at Girona University) confirmed our intuitions, and they exceeded our expectations. The richness of its biodiversity is outstanding. We convinced the owner to join the project and started the cleaning works to accommodate our first organic bee hives and recover the prat de dall.



 Bee Brave hives location

 Prat de Dall location

Objectives # 1

The main idea is to do the minimum intervention with the greatest mutual benefit. We have to let Nature do her thing. We are there to assist and escort her.

FIRST PHASE

-The first important thing is to recover the optimal state of the Prat de Dall. For this reason we have to remove the poplar trees and clean it from brambles and other bushes. We also need to cover the holes from fallen trees in order to level the ground well, so that it can be mowed.

-Along with this cleaning works we place the hives. Not on the prat de dall but some 800m away, on a shrubland of aromatics, so we also give chances to all the other pollinators to take advantage of the prat de dall's biodiversity.



Objectives # 2

SECOND PHASE

-Monitoring and maintenance of both lines of action: the hives (health of the bees, quantity and quality of the honey) and the prat de dall (variety of flora, mowing quality)

BECOME A DONOR MEADOW

For its characteristics, the Prat de Dall from Can Bech, could perfectly become a donor meadow. Then, in collaboration with Prats Vius, we would collect the seeds in order to help restore other prats de dall in the area and use this location as a project showcase.

REPLICATE THE PROJECT

After having enough data (2-3 years) we would love to replicate the project in other properties, making the necessary adjustments derived from experience



Bees, the Stars of Pollination

When we talk about bees, the entire world only thinks about honeybees, but in fact, there exist 22,000 distinct species of bees, and only one of these species produces honey. Of the remaining species, the vast majority are solitary and wild bees, which also do important pollination work. Even so, honeybees carry all the fame.

The importance of bees as bioindicators is known. The Royal Society of Geography of London and the Earthwatch Institute officially designated bees as the most important animals on the planet, both because they are the only living being that does not carry any type of pathogen, and because of their pollination work.





The honeybee is one of the most efficient pollinators, because it is in practically every environment in the planet, it works almost all year, it is very numerous in population, and above all, it is loyal to a specific flower species, increasing, therefore, the reproduction rate of each plant.

We, humans, focus more on honey bees than other insects because they are useful to us and enormously productive. When bees work, they work for us, and for the planet. To reiterate, a space of collaboration and mutual benefit.





BEE BRAVE centers on a respectful, stress-free management of honey bees that takes into account their vital rhythms and does not use any kind of chemical or synthetic treatment.



We work hand in hand with Abellaires Empordanesos (<https://www.abellaires.com/>), a pioneer in the production of organic honey in the Empordà region that has been working with bees for generations to find sites of great biodiversity and botanical richness for their hives, that will ensure a healthy environment for bees. In that sense, placing hives near prats de dall fits the bill perfectly, reinforcing the natural cycle of pollination.



The bravest bees

- Among the honey bees (*Apis mellifera*), there are several subspecies.
- In our peninsula, the most common subspecies is the *Apis mellifera iberiensis*.
- Our bees are famous not only for their fierceness, and bravery, but also because they are incredibly hard workers.
- Their bravery is necessary, because they live in a very harsh climate, with hot and dry summers, strong winds, and heavy frosts.



Hence our project's name:

- Like the imperative, be brave.
- Because we need to BEE BRAVE and take actions to combat our reality of climate change. Instead of letting the scale of the climate change problem paralyze us, we are taking a step forward with the BEE BRAVE project, and we encourage others to join us and the bees.
- BRAVANARIZ literally means brave nose. So, the bravest bees had to be our partners somehow.





MEL/the perfume

As a result of our collaboration with Abellaires Empordanesos, we are working on a solid perfume based on organic beeswax, organic honey, and regional flowers from which bees collect nectar and pollen. The result: a 100% natural non alcoholic based perfume deeply rooted in the Mediterranean landscape and the vegetal sexuality of an Empordà spring. Warm, sensual and aromatic, with a powerful animalic and balsamic base, it connects you intimately with the environment and its natural cycles.

MEL (which means honey in Catalan) is our heartfelt tribute to these fascinating winged beings who gift us, with their work, not only honey, which is one of the most delicious and nutritious foods, but also a snapshot of the massive variety of plants and flowers fundamental to the health of our planet.

Concrete Actions (1/2)

1

Study existing meadows and how they could possibly be restored or recovered as prats de dall.

2

Include these meadows in the census performed by IAEDEN.

3

Execute a census of herbaceous species and plants, as well as fauna.

4

Clean and harvest.

5

Place hives for organic honey production (ecological and stress-free management, limited production), led by Abellaires Empordanessos.

6

Monitor prats de dall annually, led by academic specialist Joan Font, an environmental biologist who collaborates regularly with IAEDEN and CUSTÒDIA AGRARIA.

Concrete Actions (2/2)

7

Design and construct Insect Hostels, to be planted in gardens and in the margins of semi-urban areas.

8

Purchase plants and seeds.

9

Design, produce and place traps for the Asian wasp.

10

Create audiovisual documentation of all processes and actions.

11

Disseminate communications about the project.

12

Design merchandizing products to help the financing of the project

BE KIND
BEE BRAVE

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