

# Saving *Attalea crassispatha*

## In Situ Conservation of Haiti's Most Endangered Palm

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### BACKGROUND

- Endemic to southern Haiti; sole member of its genus (*Attalea*) in the Caribbean.
- Discovered by Plumier in 1703 in Fonds-des-Nègres, Haiti; described as very common.
- Grows in moist forests at low altitudes; highly moisture-dependent.
- Produces nutritive oil nut, important for humans, wildlife and ecological processes.
- Reproductive biology: 1) Requires cross pollination by beetles; extremely small population & isolation among reproductive adults has led to inbreeding depression; 2) Trees first flower at around 20–25 yrs old, dominated by male flowers & no fruit production; 3) Fruiting begins at about 40 years old & extends to over 100 yrs.
- Critically Endangered (CR; C2a(i)) on the IUCN Red List. Global pop. mostly cultivated (est. 150–200).

2025 estimate  
wild population count:

**30**  
individuals

### OBJECTIVES

#### Save species from extinction

- Collect seeds for nursery propagation.
- Engage local communities.
- Educate and raise awareness.
- Prepare for reintroduction into native habitat.

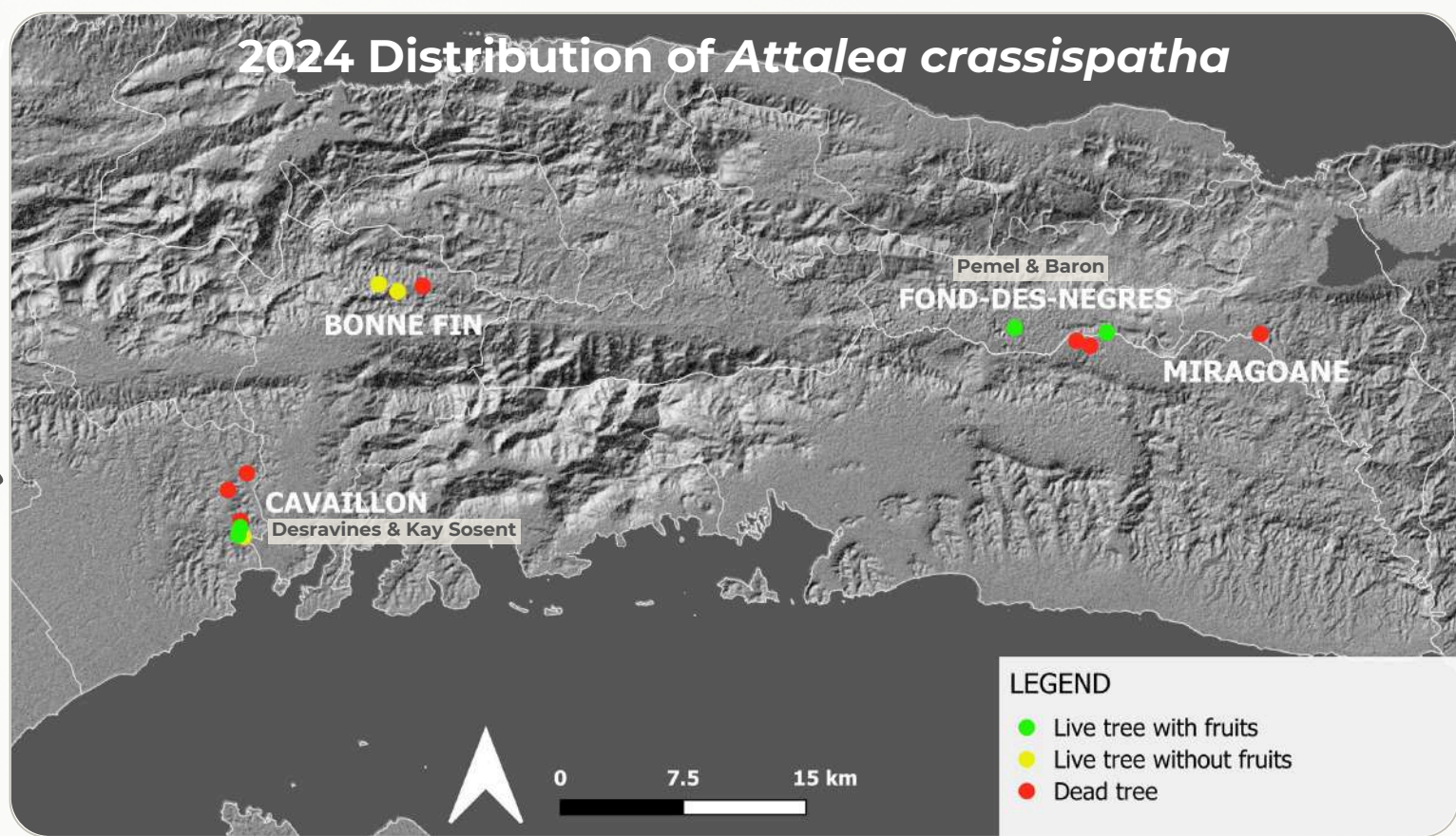
### METHODS

#### Field Mission & Seed Collection

- Conducted by HNT team (Aug–Oct 2024)
- 16 geo-referenced trees: 9 dead
- Seed collected:
  - From the tree
  - On the ground below the tree
- 843 seeds collected from 9 trees



Collection Site	Municipality	Collection Date	# Trees Harvested	Seeds Collected
Desravines	Cavaillon	7-Sep-24	3	323
Kay Sosent	Cavaillon	30-Aug-24	4	288
Pemel	FdN	5-Oct-24	1	191
Baron	FdN	5-Oct-24	1	41



#### Nursery Propagation

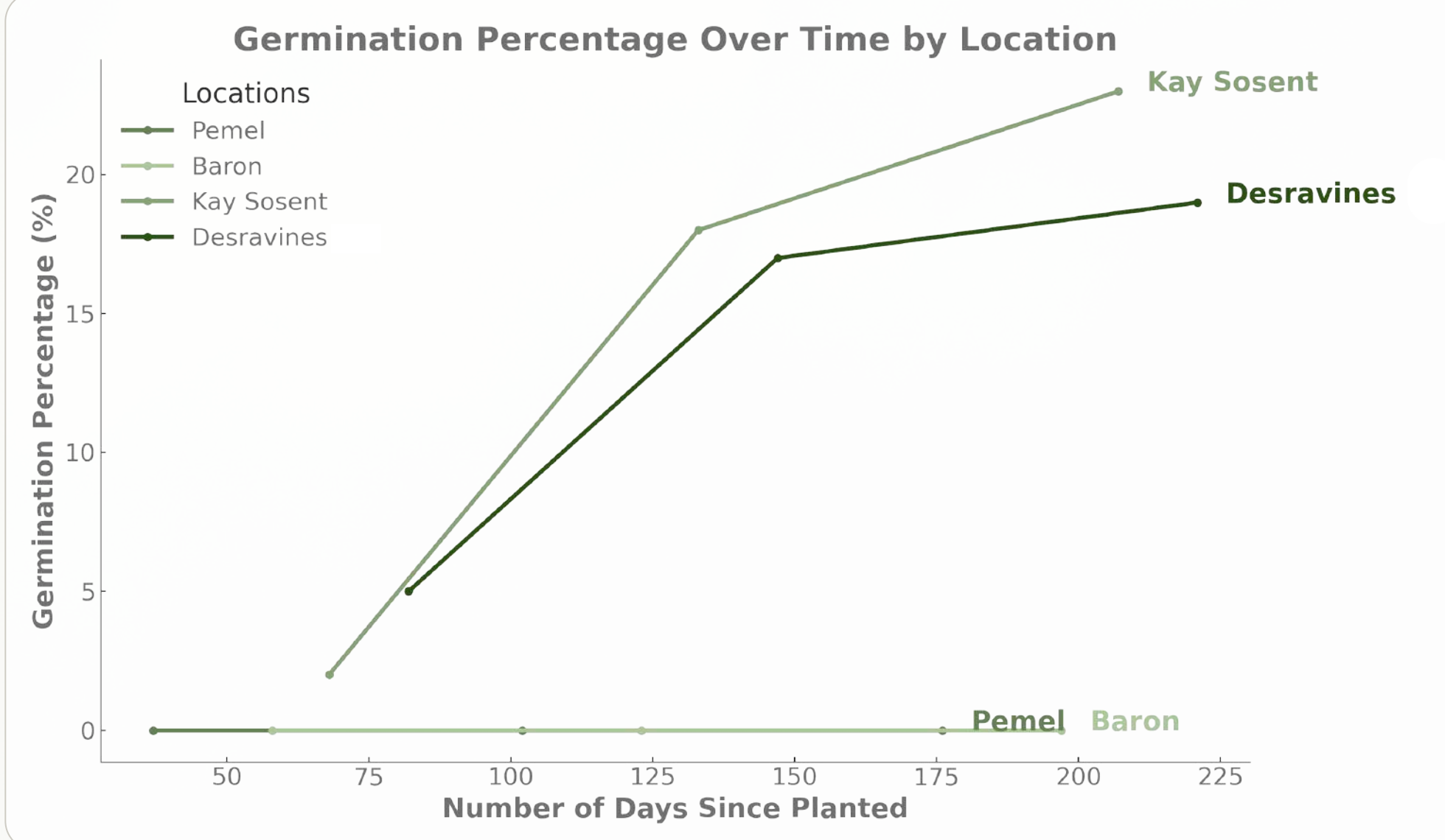
- Nursery site: ORE, Camp Perrin (Haiti, South).
- Standard substrate (soil, compost, organic manure).
- Regular monitoring: Dec'24, Feb'25, Apr'25.



### RESULTS

#### Germination

- **Desravines (1):**
  - Initial germination recorded at 82 days (5%).
  - Marked increase at 147 days (17%).
  - Highest germination percentage observed at 221 days (19%).
- **Kay Sosent:**
  - Initial germination observed at 68 days (2%).
  - Significant increase in germination at 133 days (18%).
  - Peak germination reached at 207 days (23%).
- **Pemel and Baron:**
  - No germination observed throughout the entire observation period, including the maximum days recorded (197–221 days).
  - Likely due to old non-viable seed collected on the ground and too late in the season (mid to late October).



#### Community Engagement

- 75+ locals engaged across 7+ communities.
- 31% women participants.
- Actions included:
  - Species identification & site scouting.
  - Seed collection assistance.
  - Awareness sessions in schools, agroforestry centers, clinics.



### OUTLOOK & NEXT STEPS

- Secure additional funding.
- Continue monitoring & nursery care.
- Harvest fruits during next season: June - Sept 2025.
- Reintroduction on secure sites in 3 years (2027–2028).