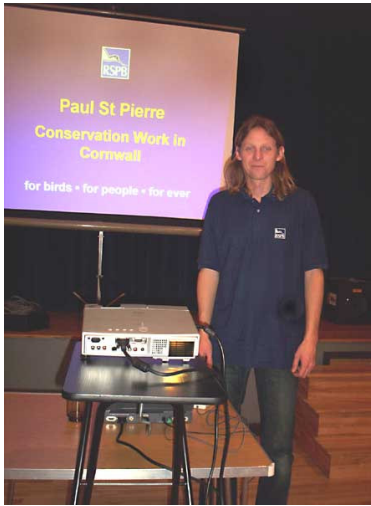


**CONSERVATION WORK IN CORNWALL.** Meeting 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2006. Chacewater Village Hall.



Paul St Pierre gave an interesting talk about his life before and after joining the RSPB staff. As a boy he watched birds in the fields around Crawley, Sussex. Later at Plymouth Polytechnic he gained a degree in Geography and was Chairman of the Bird Watchers Society there. He joined the RSPB in 1993 and was the first Cirl Bunting Officer. After that he became the Purbeck Biodiversity Officer. He has worked in South America (Falkland Islands, Bolivia lowlands, Ecuador's rarest humming bird, Purple-thighed Puff leg) and in New Zealand, Tiri-Tiri Island and in Western Australia.

Paul has been based in Marazion for 1 ½ years. Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly have 22,000 HA of SPAs and 35,000 HA of SSSIs. There is an Inland Marine Environment. Over 100 bird species here are of conservation concern. The key habitats are Heathland (second largest in the UK), Cliff and Slope, Island and Farmland.

The Exeter office has a relatively small staff to cover a large area, including Claire Mucklow, Stuart Croft (Choughs), two Information Officers at Lands End, two Reserve Staff at Marazion.

Projects on hand include progressing the inclusion of Cornwall's Important Bird Area in the new Marine Bill, monitoring the Hayle Harbour Development, studying the brown site development alongside Marazion and investigating Microlites using Golden Plover land on Bodmin Moor.

. Any problems with Species Protection are referred to Sandy and to the Local Wildlife Liaison Police Officer.

The Chough Species Recovery programme is of particular interest to our Local Group. There are 9 birds remaining from the successful broods of the original pair. There are indications that a second pair may start nesting in 2006. So far 16,000 visitors have visited the Lizard and 120 volunteers have been helping with the protection of the nesting birds.

There are many advisory roles for the RSPB staff and they also take part in Partnership/Landscape projects.

The Big Five Challenges are:

1. To protect the Marine Environment.
2. To save endangered species.
3. To maintain and protect National and International IS.
4. To restore /recreate primary habitats.
5. To Improve the value of lowland grassland systems for birds.

The Question and Answer session, after the break for refreshments, covered a wide range of topics from the impact of the Gosmoor bypass to measures being taken to monitor bird flu on RSPB reserves.

