

Talk 121019

Saturday October 12th at 10.30am - 'Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and Nature Conservation Projects' - Paul Culyer

Paul is NRW's Senior Manager, Land Management' in Pembrokeshire and is based at Stackpole. NRW was formed by the Welsh 'Assembly by joining Countryside Council for Wales, the Environment Agency and the Forestry Commission. Its remit is maintaining legal standards in air quality, water quality, flood protection, land quality and conservation. It works hand in glove with other conservation bodies such as the National Trust, RSPB, National Parks and Wildlife Trusts.

Paul's first point was that no part of Britain's rural environment has been untouched by humans. What we are trying to conserve now is land that has not been industrialised and land which has not been subjected to intensive farming. There has been a dramatic loss of such land in the last century which affects not just the land but also the flora and fauna it supports. Government has now set up legal arrangements which enable areas of land, rivers and sea to be protected by organisations like those above.

Paul then talked about a number of National Nature Reserves in Pembrokeshire. Coedmore has rivers protected to allow salmon and sewin to use them. Pengelli Forest has areas of ancient and coppice woodland which support dormice and bats. Ty Canol has areas of woodland, traditional meadows and rocky outcrops which are home to wide variety of lichens. The low air pollution in West Wales is also important for lichens. Llangloffen Fen is a wetland in which adders thrive.

We then have the islands. Ramsey has a heathland which supports sheep, ponies, deer and breeding birds. Grasholm is one of the major breeding locations for gannets in the UK. Skomer has a breeding colony of around 20 thousand puffins and, together with Skokholm, supports 50% of the world population of manx shearwaters.

In the south of the County the Stackpole estate has large areas of woodland, the lake system, clifftop areas for choughs, beaches and the sand dune system at Freshwater West. The beautiful River Cleddau is also protected.

Paul and his comrades are never short of things to do.