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# Early Holocene Hunter-Fisher-Gatherer in transition? – Mesolithic sites in Duvensee Bog, south-eastern Holstein, Northern Germany

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## Abstract

The Duvensee peat bog in south-western Schleswig-Holstein, Northern Germany, represents one of the most prominent Stone Age palaeo landscapes in Northern Europe. After first archaeological investigations of Mesolithic sites by G. Schwantes and K. Gripp in the 1920s and later H. Schwabedissen further research was conducted by Klaus Bokelmann since the 1960s. An intensive survey and excavation programme led to the discovery of several new Mesolithic and Neolithic camp sites on small islands or peninsulas on the western border of the former Holocene lake. The two oldest sites, Wohnplatz 8 and 9, are dated to ca. 11,100-10,700 cal BP to the late Preboreal. They are followed by the early Boreal sites Wohnplatz 2, 11, 21, 1, and 6, which are dating between 10,800 and 9,900 cal BP. The sequence of Mesolithic sites with flint assemblages on the western bank of ancient Lake Duvensee ends with the late Boreal site Wohnplatz 13 (9,900-9,700 cal BP), the early Atlantic site Wohnplatz 19 delivered only a bark mat and a few charcoal concentrations.

The outstanding preservation of these camp sites with hearths, bark mats and flint knapping areas allows detailed examinations of the spatial organisation of prehistoric hunter-gatherer camp sites even though they may present only one very specialised, temporary part of the economic and settlement behaviour on an annual cycle. Hazelnut harvest was certainly very important at the temporary camp sites in Duvensee. However, specialized hazelnut roasting hearths are only proven for some of the early Boreal sites. Therefore it is still subject to intensive discussion, if hazelnut exploitation was a leading characteristic for the Early Holocene and hunting only secondary or if the contribution of hazel-nuts to the Mesolithic subsistence is easily overestimated and the clear evidence of the importance of hunting and fishing on other North German Mesolithic sites like Hohen Viecheln or Friesack is ignored.

Since 2010, studies on the Mesolithic Duvensee bog sites has resumed under the auspices of the ZBSA. In a first step, all existing excavation records, augmented by geological, paleobotanical and archaeological data sets, have been digitalized and integrated in a Geographic Information System (GIS). Today the archaeological investigations are a fundamental part of the research project B2: "*Transitions of Specialized Foragers*" of the Collaborative Research Centre (CRC) 1266 "*Scales of Transformations. Human-Environmental Interaction in Prehistoric and Archaic Societies*" of Kiel University, ZBSA and Schleswig-Holstein State Museum of Archaeology.

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**Keywords:** Early Holocene, Bog site, Hazelnuts, Mesolithic, Hunter, Fisher, Gatherer