



Each breeding pair has got one to two youngsters hatching in April/May and staying with their parents until next spring.

Cranes in the large bog of Uchte

The open landscapes of the industrial peat digging who already regained intact moisture content offer thousands of cranes (*Grus grus*) safe and quiet sleeping places. In autumn in the year 2008 11.000 cranes stayed here over night – the highest number counted until now. As the restoration continues and increases, so do the resting places for the cranes - therefore we can count on higher numbers of resting cranes. The huge cultivated land surrounding the bog of Uchte is a perfect food source for the big grey birds, though some land northward of the bog got lost as such since the installation of a wind park in 2006.

In the year 2009, the first breeding cranes were recognized. Beginning in march, the cranes build their nests hidden in the quiet, undisturbed and wet bog. The nesting season of the one to two eggs takes about 30 days. A couple of days after hatching, the small family already goes for small trips through the bog and to its borders.

You should concentrate on the northern look-out for effective crane-watching. The road "K 39" leads you to the parking-place. The look-out can also be found by route guidance systems under the following address: Darlaten 55, 31600 Uchte.



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The wetlands of Uchte

A bog with potential



A few basics

» **Total area:** 5.660 ha of wetland (with about 30 cm layer of peat)

» **Cultivation:** Rural peat-digging at the borders, industrial peat-digging in the centre, extraction depth up to 3 m

» **Restoration:** Since the first restoration plain was established about 20 years ago, there are continuously measures taken for further wetland restoration of former peateries

» **Protection:** The nature reserve contains 3.263 ha and has been declared FFH - (Flora and Fauna Habitat) and European Bird reserves

A bog with potential

Seeing the bog of Uchte from just the geological side, it is the (by far) largest bog in the landscape of the Diepholzer Moorniederung. In the north are little mineral islands that drive through the peat soil and haven't been overgrown from the bog yet.

The north has been formed by agricultural cultivation for centuries, while the centre of the bog has been formed by the industrial peat extraction, which is going to be continued for a few decades. Luckily, areas with already reached maxima of extraction depths are released from the peat-digging. With the aid of a hydrological plan, the areas are going to be renaturated: Via crawler and digger the land gets planed and the drainage systems filled up. Peat-dykes which have been built with special laser-technology for

their exact height are perfect requirements for the renaturation of the former wetlands.

Areas that have been waterlogged again since a couple of years show first results: Rare bird species return for breeding and resting. The further development will show the large potential of the landscape from the Uchter bog for specific flora and fauna. Visitors are invited to experience these changes from the look-outs and signposted paths or the "Moorbahn", a little train which offers rides through the bog.

Left: The peat-digging impresses huge parts of the landscape in the Uchter bog. Right: Typical bog-plants start to grow again. Especially the Common cotton-grass is eye-catching with its red colours in autumn.

