

What is the best time to view hawks? And where in the park?

You can see various birds of prey pretty much year round in Foothills Park. Birds commonly seen here are: Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), American Kestrels (*Falco sparverius*), Cooper's Hawks (*Accipiter cooperii*), Sharp-shinned hawks (*Accipiter striatus*), Turkey Vultures (*Cathartes aura*), White-tailed Kites (*Elanus leucurus*), Great Horned Owls (*Bubo virginianus*) and Barn Owls (*Tyto alba*). It is also possible to see Bald Eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), Golden Eagles (*Aquila chrysaetos*) and Ospreys (*Pandion haliaetus*).

The fall hawk migration is from about mid-August to mid-December (depending on species, weather, etc...). A wide variety of hawks and raptors can be seen cruising along ridges throughout the bay area as they move from summer homes to their wintering grounds, kites can be seen flapping their wings to keep steady in the breeze, harriers often course over open grassy areas and groups of vultures are often seen circling higher and higher in thermals.

The best hawk viewing in Foothills Park is on Vista Hill. On warm days hawks can be seen soaring over both Foothills Park and the Pearson Arastradero Preserve, they may also be seen gliding in updrafts caused by winds off the bay hitting the foothills and hunting over the many open areas in both parks.

Another good viewing point will require a hike along Los Trancos Trail to the upper end of Foothills Park (the highest point in Foothills Park is near Gate 4 a few hundred feet from Los Trancos Trail) where, on a clear day, you can see from San Francisco to Mount Hamilton.