



ARTICLE

2020 Falcon Monitoring Season Begins

[Pinnacles National Park \(https://www.nps.gov/pinn/\)](https://www.nps.gov/pinn/)



Although red-shouldered hawks primarily hunt and prey upon rodents and other small mammals, they will seek other food sources when available. This one was spotted actively hunting for legless lizards in the Pinnacles Campground; it caught the reptiles on at least two occasions.

NPS / Gavin Emmons

February 2020 - The breeding raptor season is starting up again at Pinnacles National Park! Prairie falcons and peregrine falcons have returned to nesting territories and are actively inspecting potential cliff cavity sites for nesting. [Raptor advisories are in effect \(https://www.nps.gov/pinn/planyourvisit/advisory.htm\)](https://www.nps.gov/pinn/planyourvisit/advisory.htm) to help visitors avoid disturbing the birds during this sensitive time. Advisory signs are posted at Balconies, Hawkins Peak, and near Little Pinnacles / Yaks Wall.

As of late February 2020, [falcon monitoring \(https://www.nps.gov/im/sfan/falcons.htm\)](https://www.nps.gov/im/sfan/falcons.htm), staff and volunteers have confirmed seven prairie falcons pairs and two single prairie falcons occupying nesting territories. They have also confirmed three peregrine falcon pairs and one single peregrine in territories. Other raptor species active in the park early this year have included American kestrels, red-tailed hawks, great horned and barn owls, and Cooper's and sharp-shinned hawks. Red-shouldered hawks are also vocal and are inspecting potential stick nest sites in the bottomlands.

Have Pinnacles raptor observations to report, or any questions about raptors in the park? Contact [Gavin Emmons \(https://www.nps.gov/common/utilities/sendmail/sendemail.cfm?o=4C84CDB293ECAAB199B41DBCD919BBBE089A4999&r=/articles/2020-falcon-monitoring-season-begins.htm\)](https://www.nps.gov/common/utilities/sendmail/sendemail.cfm?o=4C84CDB293ECAAB199B41DBCD919BBBE089A4999&r=/articles/2020-falcon-monitoring-season-begins.htm).

[See more from the Bay Area Nature & Science Blog.](#)
(<https://www.nps.gov/rlc/pacificcoast/blog.htm>).



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