

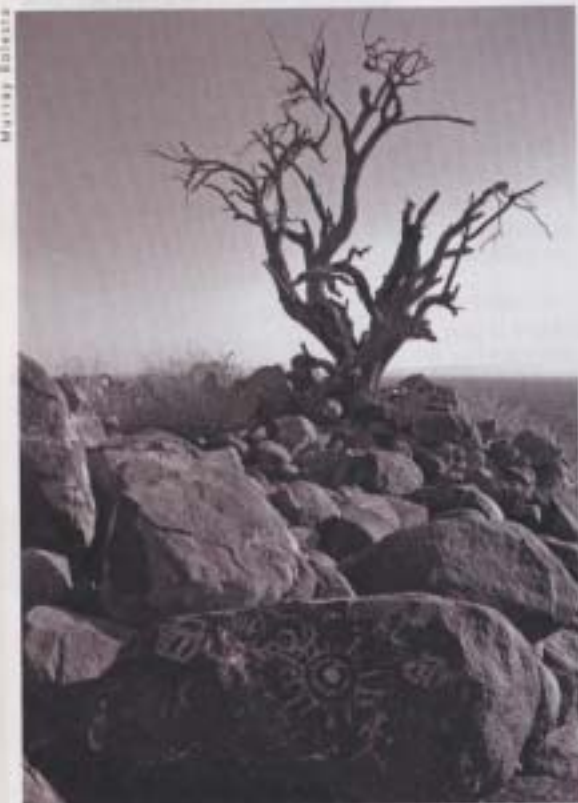
little too "free," like the arsonists who recently torched more than 200 feet of boardwalk in Nevada's Red Rocks Canyon National Conservation Area. The result: a fragile ecosystem protected by that boardwalk has suffered and public enjoyment of these resources is threatened. Vandalism is a constant issue for BLM field staff.

Simple lack of awareness threatens these incredible lands and waters. Because many people don't know about the trails and resources of the BLM's Conservation System, these special lands don't get the same level of volunteerism and advocacy as other public lands. Not surprisingly, the people who run, hike and backpack in these special places will play an important role in ensuring they remain protected for future generations to enjoy. After all, many effective and notable conservation advocates, particularly Benton MacKaye and John Muir, were pioneering hikers and trail runners.

Joining the race to conserve the newest and most exciting system of public lands in America is easy — just go to [AmericanHiking.org](http://AmericanHiking.org) and click on "Best NLC5 Hikes"

to read contest rules and submit pictures and descriptions of your favorite NLC5 hikes. Winning entries will receive recognition on American Hiking's website in early May, and some great gear too. Better, winning trails will benefit from American Hiking Society efforts to promote Leave No Trace principles and build a culture of volunteerism and stewardship on our great western trails. Enter your favorite trail and protect the next frontier of trail running, hiking, and backpacking!

Seth Levy manages the Western Public Lands Initiative at American Hiking Society. American Hiking has protected trails and promoted the hiking (and running) experience since 1976.



Scene on the trail: Ironwood Forest NM (above) and Devil's Garden, Grand Staircase-Escalante NM (opposite page)

## Wild Things

### Hydration 101

**HydraCoach  
Hydration Monitor; \$30**

Perhaps it was due to the accumulation of 22 years of endurance racing and the chronic dehydration that came with triathlons, marathons, ultramarathons, and adventure races that I recently suffered my first kidney stone. The only positives that I can draw from such an excruciating experience are: 1) newfound respect for all mothers, as I'm told there are supposed to be parallels between "passing" and "delivering;" 2) a higher pain threshold; and 3) the importance of hydrating.

Fortunately the hydration element is easier to tackle with a new device called "HydraCoach." As the first "interactive water bottle," the HydraCoach's patented hydration monitor enables users to program in their personal hydration needs, track their daily water consumption sip by sip, and be coached throughout the day to stay hydrated.

The HydraCoach was created by Craig and Kelly Perkins, both lifelong, avid outdoor enthusiasts. In 1996 the two were attempting to hike to the top of Half Dome in Yosemite, just 10 months after Kelly had undergone a heart transplant. During their descent Kelly became severely dehydrated, turning a triumphant comeback adventure into a nightmare epic, and putting Kelly back in the hospital.

Based on a user's weight, the duration of exercise, and manual adjustments, if necessary, the HydraCoach calculates hydration needs and monitors fluid intake to ensure goals are met. A magnetized impeller floats in a sealed cartridge in the straw-like mouthpiece of the water bottle, where it works with a microprocessor to monitor the quantity of fluid consumed. —A.W.C.

