



Ellen Morris Bishop

Gardener Cathy Mullins explains how she and her husband built the hugel that supports most of her flower garden.

HUGELKULTUR

Gardening with a natural raised bed

By Ellen Morris Bishop
Wallowa County Chieftain

Cathy Mullins is in love with her hugel. The free-form raised bed winds through her flower garden, supporting a variety of blossoms and greenery, from teddy-bear sunflowers to sweet peas to alliums. “I am in love with flowers. Someday this will be just a riot of flowers and plants, a place where you can walk and discover all sorts of new things, edible things, plants and bees and birds, with a surprise around every corner,” she said.

“Hugelkultur” is a German term that means “mound culture” and has been practiced in northern Europe for hundreds of years. A hugel, says local naturalist Ralph Anderson, is a free-form raised bed constructed of natural materials—a foundation of decaying logs, covered by compost and other nutrients, plus soil. Under Ander-



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A bumblebee checks out the flowers on a set of chives growing on the hugel in Cathy Mullins' garden

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