Hugelkultur

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Garden Project
Hugelkultur
Hugelkultur raised garden beds in a nutshell

– grow a typical garden without irrigation or fertilization
– has been demonstrated to work in deserts as well as backyards
– use up rotting wood, twigs, branches and even whole trees that would otherwise go to the dump or be burned
– it is buried wood covered with compost and soil
– can be flush with the ground, although raised garden beds are typically better
– can start small, and be added to later- although bigger is better
– does carbon sequestration in your own back yard
– perfect for places that have had trees blown over by storms
The old wood pile

This wood pile was old rotting wood. I split the wood for the base of the hugelkultur bed. I worked with the wood while it was cold, so any critters and bugs would be inactive...
Split wood

I used an axe and a pick to break the wood into smaller pieces.
First layer

Lined up wood pieces form the first layer of the raised bed.
Each layer in the bed is watered with the hose.
Added smaller branches and sticks

The process involves adding a smaller layer of sticks and branches on top of the larger pieces of wood. Watered this layer before adding the leaves.
Second layer with sticks and leaves

Over the sticks, I added leaves from the yard in a thick layer, as a compost, and watered them well.
The second bed base

I started a second bed near the first one. Three beds will be constructed in this garden area.
The second bed covered with leaf material

This bed was made with the same process, a layer of larger wood pieces, a layer of branches, and a thick layer of leaf material. It was watered several times, as the leaves were from the fall.
The third bed

Same method employed. All three of these beds were worked last fall without the hugelkultur wood base. I turned them, layered compost and leaves, and covered them with soil for the winter.
Compost layer

On top of the thick layer of leaves, I added compost on top of the leaves. Before I added the compost, I sprinkled some human urine (sorry if that is too gross) to help the leaves break down.
Soil layer added

About two wheel barrows full of soil, and the soil from the original bed were added to the bed. It was watered down, and left to settle.