In article <k0ogjyk5es.fsf@regge.strw.leidenuniv.nl>,
 Carsten Dominik <dominik@strw.leidenuniv.nl> writes:
>
> Hi
>
> Yesterday I learned about ROUTINE_INFO which is incredible useful
> to find out about the arguments of procedures and functions without
> having to look into the file.
>
> Now I am looking for a way to get the same information about builtin
> routines without having to look into hyperhelp. Hyperhelp is OK when
> you want to know all the details about a function, but I find slow and
> clumsy when I just have forgotten the names of available keywords.
>
> Obviously (?) this cannot be done with ROUTINE_INFO, because it
> unfortunately does not allow the /SYSTEM keyword together with
> /PARAMETERS keyword. This is too bad and would be a good topic for an
> extension request. Anyone at RSI reading this?

I agree! It is quite frustrating to start "Hyperhelp"
just because you forgot one keyword. I would love to
see something like

   IDL> SHOW_INFO, 'WIDGET_CONTROL'

and have the help page printed to the terminal window.

> If there is no function to get this information, how can I get a table
> of all builtin routines with their arguments in machine-readable form?
> I have looked at the hyper-help files, but they are binary, so the
> info cannot be extracted from them (at least I cannot...)

I looked on Bristol's web site, and they don't appear to provide
any information about their file formats, so I wrote a
skeleton of a routine that parses the Postscript
output from Hyperhelp. It's pretty crude though, because you
lose a lot of formatting information in the process. It's not
quite ready to use, but I could probably clean it up if anyone
is interested.

By the way, ROUTINE_INFO (/SYSTEM) provides some routines that
so not appear in the online help at all, for example,
WIDGET_SET_RESOURCE. Also, BEEP is listed there :-)

Regards,

-bob mallozzi

--
~~~~~~ ~~~~~~~~~
Robert S. Mallozzi   256-544-0887
                              Mail Code ES 84
Work: http://gammaray.msfc.nasa.gov/   Marshall Space Flight Center
Play: http://cspar.uah.edu/~mallozzir/   Huntsville, AL 35812
~~~~~~ ~~~~~~~~~