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Subject: Re: Do netCDF Files Have a DataType of INT?  
Posted by [SonicKenking](#) on Mon, 03 Jun 2013 05:11:44 GMT  
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On Monday, June 3, 2013 12:36:19 PM UTC+10, David Fanning wrote:

> Folks,  
>  
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>  
> I've run into a problem with a netCDF file and I need a sanity check.  
>  
>  
>  
> I define a variable attribute "colortable" with an integer value, say  
>  
> 33. As far as I know netCDF files don't have a datatype named "INT", so  
>  
> I use the datatype "SHORT" when I create the attribute:  
>  
>  
>  
>    NCDF\_ATTPUT, fileID, self.ID, 'colortable', 33, /SHORT  
>  
>  
>  
> Now, I want to read this attribute out of the file and copy it to  
>  
> another file. To learn something about this attribute I use the IDL  
>  
> routine NCDF\_ATTINQ:  
>  
>  
>  
>    attrInfo = NCDF\_Attnq(fileID, GLOBAL=1, 'colortable')  
>  
>  
>  
> But, the datatype field of this attribute structure is inexplicably set  
>  
> to INT:  
>  
>  
>  
>    IDL> Print, attrInfo.datatype  
>  
>        INT  
>  
>

>  
> Does that make *\*any\** sense to anyone?  
>  
>  
>  
> Cheers,  
>  
>  
>  
> David  
>  
>  
>  
>  
>  
> --  
>  
> David Fanning, Ph.D.  
>  
> Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.  
>  
> Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: <http://www.idlcoyote.com/>  
>  
> Sepore ma de ni thue. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")

My understanding is that NCDF Short is equivalent to IDL Int. They are both 2 byte integers. But since IDL does not have a Short type, the data type is reported by NCDF\_Attnq (an IDL routine) as INT, which is the result of an implicit type conversion. They are basically the same thing. But I do think the fact that you get INT from Attnq but have to use SHORT in VarDef is rather confusing.

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