Subject: Re: Plot colors
Posted by Michael Galloy on Thu, 20 Jun 2013 17:24:00 GMT
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On 6/20/13 12:59 AM, Mats Löfdahl wrote:
> What are your favorite colors for overplotting several data sets in the
> same diagram? (I'm assuming Coyote graphics here.) You'd want them to be
> easy to tell apart and to have a good and similar contrast against the
> (white) background.
>
> For two colors it's easy: red and blue.
>
> But already for three colors, if you add green you get something with
> less contrasty. And for more colors, if you add the complement colors
> cyan, magenta, and yellow, both yellow and cyan have the same problem.
> So then I usually inspect the color names in cgcolor and pick darker
> versions of the too light colors and some redder version of yellow. And
> if I need more than six I don't really know what to do...
>
> So, what is a good strategy? Do you have a good list that you always
> use, and truncate it to the needed length? Or do you start the list
> differently depending on how long it has to be? Has anybody written a
> function for this? Something like
>
> function plotcolors, index, Ncolors
>
>
> /Mats

This is what the qualitative color tables in the Brewer color tables are for.

Checkout color tables 27-34 in the Brewer color tables (the second set of color tables) on:

http://docs.idldev.com/mglib/vis/color/mg_loadct.html

To use one of these, say 27, just do:

mg_loadct, /brewer, 27

and then just use COLOR=0, COLOR=1, ... COLOR=11 (color table 27 has 12 values).

The Brewer color tables are included in IDL now, but they interpolated intermediate values for the qualitative color tables, so you have to use something like the following to get the 5th of the 12 values in a color table:

COLOR=5 * 256 / 12

Mike
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Michael Galloy
www.michaelgalloy.com
Modern IDL: A Guide to IDL Programming (http://modernidl.idldev.com)
Research Mathematician
Tech-X Corporation
