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Subject: problem loading color palette

Posted by [aetherlux](#) on Mon, 24 Jul 2006 16:10:36 GMT

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Hi everybody, I use IDL 6.0 with Debian GNU/Linux. Today after trying to load a color palette to draw several maps, I have noticed that the palette is not loaded.

I use:

device, decomposed=0

xloadct (and then I choose the palette or loadct, 41 -- the number of the palette)

It happens with all the palettes.

I guess that it is related with the X server. Perhaps it is a consequence of a recent update from Debian Sarge to Etch, which has changed my Xserver (in Sarge it was XFree86 and now in Etch is Xorg).

Does anybody know a solution to force IDL to load the palettes?

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Subject: Re: problem loading color palette

Posted by [Karl Schultz](#) on Tue, 25 Jul 2006 14:55:45 GMT

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On Tue, 25 Jul 2006 03:57:47 -0700, aetherlux wrote:

> Karl Schultz wrote:

>> On Mon, 24 Jul 2006 09:10:36 -0700, aetherlux wrote:

>>

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>> It really may be more of a function of your desktop software, especially the window manager.

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>> Term: ICCCM - Inter-client communications convention manual

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>> IDL uses the ICCCM-compliant method of setting the colormap ID in the  
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>> First, try just clicking or pointing at the window, to set focus on that  
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>> A lot of newer desktops and window managers steadfastly refuse to install  
>> a different colormap on the server because it causes all the GUI elements  
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>> the ICCCM and some desktops sort of "ignore" some parts of it.  
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>> DEVICE, /INSTALL\_COLORMAP  
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>> You might also try using a TrueColor visual (DEVICE, TRUE\_COLOR=24). But  
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>> Hope this helps,  
>> Karl  
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> the other with Debian and Icewm. In the Debian/icewm laptop when I run  
> the program first the new window appears almost out of the screen, to  
> the left of the screen.

I don't know what might be causing this. I have a laptop with Ubuntu  
installed - maybe I'll see if I have the same problem.

Are you using a virtual desktop that is larger than the physical screen?

You also might submit this issue to ITTVIS Technical Support with all the  
supporting information. That way, you can be sure it will be  
investigated.

> Although I have tried to choose my palette, it has not been loaded and

> the colors are from the default IDL palette. If I move the mouse pointer  
> to the window with the map (almost out of the screen) then the map  
> colors change and it is showed with the right colors. By the way, the  
> complete icewm desktop environment changes to awful and strange colors.

That is exactly the expected behavior. This is all about the colormap installation process that I tried to explain above. You see, all but very expensive graphics systems have only one color table in its hardware. When an X client, like IDL, wants its own color table, it must share this hardware resource with other clients, including all the desktop crud. So, the window manager adjusts the contents of the hardware color table depending on which client has the focus. If you don't buy my explanation, then read some material about X Windows. These issues are fairly well known and understood.

Again, this "colormap flashing" issue is regarded as pretty distasteful in the Linux community. One approach to avoiding it is using the TrueColor visual. More recent versions of IDL now try to use a TrueColor visual before DirectColor by default for this very reason. You can explicitly request this behavior by using "DEVICE, TRUE\_COLOR=24" before issuing any graphics commands. I think you'll be much happier if you do this.

> I have a bigger problem, now the image is showed with right colors, but  
> the my output file with this map in yet saved with the default colors.

Sorry, I don't know what you mean by "output file". You'll need to say how you created it.

Karl

---

---

Subject: Re: problem loading color palette  
Posted by [aetherlux](#) on Tue, 25 Jul 2006 15:20:15 GMT  
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> Karl

I have got to solve the problem. It works fine but yet with the window  
placed to the left of the screen.  
Before issuing any graphics command:

```
device, /install_colormap  
device, true_color=24
```

```
device, decomposed=0
xloadct
```

now you can choose your favourite palette.

About the "output file": I write a tiff file to disk to save the obtained graphic:

```
myfile='/home/user/map.tif'
write_tiff,myfile,map,4
```

Thank you very much everybody.

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Subject: Re: problem loading color palette  
Posted by [btt](#) on Tue, 25 Jul 2006 18:08:17 GMT  
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aetherlux wrote:

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```
>
```

```
>
```

Hi,

WRITE\_TIFF is expecting only one or two argument according to the IDL online docs (IDL 6.3). What are you trying to do with the third argument (4) that you have shown?

Ben

---

---

Subject: Re: problem loading color palette  
Posted by [aetherlux](#) on Thu, 27 Jul 2006 09:47:51 GMT  
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---

Well, I don't know how it works for IDL 6.3 but in IDL 6.0 Write\_tiff supports several arguments. My whole Write\_tiff is:

```
Write_tiff,myfile,map,4,orientation=3
```

It is a trick that I had found surfing the internet to get the correct orientation for my output file.  
Moreover I use the arguments "xresol=\*\*\*" and "yresol=\*\*\*" to indicate the resolution of the file, where \*\*\* is the resolution.

Ben Tupper wrote:

> aetherlux wrote:

>

>>>

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---

---

Subject: Re: problem loading color palette  
Posted by [aetherlux](#) on Thu, 27 Jul 2006 09:51:27 GMT  
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---

I have found out that this solution doesn't work for Ubuntu. Instead,  
if you X window system let it, you can try:

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device, /pseudo_color
device, decomposed=0
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It has worked for a colleague using Ubuntu.

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> Thank you very much everybody.

---

---

Subject: Re: problem loading color palette  
Posted by [Karl\[1\]](#) on Thu, 27 Jul 2006 14:18:58 GMT  
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The discussion about the arguments to write\_tiff does not answer the original question.

The palette loaded with loadct, xloadct, or tvlct does not automatically get applied to your data when you write it to an output file with write\_tiff. The palette is for display purposes only. I'm not sure how you came to the conclusion that write\_tiff would translate your image data stored in the map variable through the display device's palette.

What you probably want to do is to get the contents of the palette with TVLCT, /GET. Then, use your data in the 'map' variable to lookup the R, G, and B values and write the result to the tiff file.

Something like:

```
TVLCT, r, g, b, /get  
red = r[map]  
green = g[map]  
blue = b[map]
```

You now have the 3-channel RGB image in red, green, and blue.

aetherlux wrote:

> Well, I don't know how it works for IDL 6.3 but in IDL 6.0 Write\_tiff  
> supports several arguments. My whole Write\_tiff is:  
>  
> Write\_tiff,myfile,map,4,orientation=3  
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> It is a trick that I had found surfing the internet to get the correct  
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---

Subject: Re: problem loading color palette  
Posted by [Karl\[1\]](#) on Thu, 27 Jul 2006 14:28:32 GMT  
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---

This all seems to work fine for me on my ubuntu laptop with IDL 6.3.

All I had to do was:

```
device, decomposed=0
```

```
loadct, 1  
tvsc1, dist(400)
```

and I get a nice blue/white pattern. I don't get colormap flashing because this version of IDL selects the TrueColor visual by default. The window shows up in the upper-right corner of the screen, like it should. I don't know what is going on with your debian/icewm setup.

Using

```
device, /pseudo_color
```

is probably wrong.

Most X servers in the XFree86 / X.org lineage do not have PseudoColor visual support.

```
If I issue  
device, /pseudo_color  
device, /help
```

I get a message saying the PseudoColor is not supported and IDL is using the default TrueColor visual instead, which is quite correct.

Use xdpinfo to learn what Visuals are supported on your X server.

I also strongly recommend reading the IDL documentation about the X device and/or contacting ITTVIS tech support for further assistance. A lot of the discussion here is in the IDL documentation.

Karl

aetherlux wrote:

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>>> an X client, like IDL, wants its own color table, it must share this  
>>> hardware resource with other clients, including all the desktop crud. So,  
>>> the window manager adjusts the contents of the hardware color table  
>>> depending on which client has the focus. If you don't buy my explanation,  
>>> then read some material about X Windows. These issues are fairly well  
>>> known and understood.  
>>>  
>>> Again, this "colormap flashing" issue is regarded as pretty distasteful in  
>>> the Linux community. One approach to avoiding it is using the TrueColor  
>>> visual. More recent versions of IDL now try to use a TrueColor visual  
>>> before DirectColor by default for this very reason. You can explicitly  
>>> request this behavior by using "DEVICE, TRUE\_COLOR=24" before issuing any  
>>> graphics commands. I think you'll be much happier if you do this.  
>>>  
>>>> I have a bigger problem, now the image is showed with right colors, but  
>>>> the my output file with this map in yet saved with the default colors.  
>>>  
>>> Sorry, I don't know what you mean by "output file". You'll need to say  
>>> how you created it.

```
>>>
>>> Karl
>>
>> I have got to solve the problem. It works fine but yet with the window
>> placed to the left of the screen.
>> Before issuing any graphics command:
>>
>> device, /install_colormap
>> device, true_color=24
>> device, decomposed=0
>> xloadct
>>
>> now you can choose your favourite palette.
>>
>> About the "output file": I write a tiff file to disk to save the
>> obtained graphic:
>>
>> myfile='/home/user/map.tif'
>> write_tiff,myfile,map,4
>>
>> Thank you very much everybody.
```

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