Subject: Re: Mac Cursor
Posted by David Fanning on Sat, 04 Nov 2006 01:14:07 GMT
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Jeff Hester writes:

> Having just installed IDL 6.3 on a new MacBook Pro running OS X 10.4.8,
> and having just updated X11, I find that CURSOR refuses to respond to
> mouse events. Yes, I have tried using keywords instead of the wait
> parameter. Cursor,x,y,/down (or any other flag) hangs the window, and
> the only way to get out is to kill the window directly. The only way
> that I can get any information back at all is if I use cursor,x,y,/nowait.
>
> Thoughts?

Have you tried the suggestion in this article:

   http://www.dfanning.com/misc_tips/cursor_on_mac.html

Cheers,

David

--
David Fanning, Ph.D.
Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.
Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: http://www.dfanning.com/
Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")

Subject: Re: Mac Cursor
Posted by Jeff Hester on Sat, 04 Nov 2006 05:56:06 GMT
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David,

Thanks much! I appreciate it. (I should have found that one myself. I
stopped after the first search hit on "Macintosh cursor".)

In the world I live in -- Astronomy -- there is currently a dramatic
move away from PCs and Linux boxes to the Mac platform. I'm sure that
is the case more broadly as well. A compilation of Mac-related
questions/answers/discussion would probably be well-read. I'm not the
right person to maintain the list, but if I knew someone was keeping
track, I'd certainly contribute anything that I ran across.

Cheers,
Jeff

David Fanning wrote:
> Jeff Hester writes:
>
>
>> Having just installed IDL 6.3 on a new MacBook Pro running OS X 10.4.8,
>> and having just updated X11, I find that CURSOR refuses to respond to
>> mouse events. Yes, I have tried using keywords instead of the wait
>> parameter. Cursor,x,y,/down (or any other flag) hangs the window, and
>> the only way to get out is to kill the window directly. The only way
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>>
>> Thoughts?
>
>
> Have you tried the suggestion in this article:
>
>   http://www.dfanning.com/misc_tips/cursor_on_mac.html
>
> Cheers,
>
> David
>

Subject: Re: Mac Cursor
Posted by David Fanning on Sat, 04 Nov 2006 15:58:08 GMT

Jeff Hester writes:

> In the world I live in -- Astronomy -- there is currently a dramatic
> move away from PCs and Linux boxes to the Mac platform. I'm sure that
> is the case more broadly as well. A compilation of Mac-related
> questions/answers/discussion would probably be well-read. I'm not the
> right person to maintain the list, but if I knew someone was keeping
> track, I'd certainly contribute anything that I ran across.

Having spent five weeks in Hawaii last year in the
company of astronomers, I witnessed this dramatic
enthusiasm for Macs, and also noted the almost
universal inverse correlation of this enthusiasm
with UNIX knowledge.

I think we can attribute much of this to the brilliant

Mac/PC advertisements we see on TV. I can't say why
astronomers are especially susceptible to this kind of
advertising, but it would be an interesting thesis topic
for someone. I would put Paul van Delst's name forward
as someone who can provide insight into why a researcher
loves a machine that crashes 10 times a day. I will
say, however, that the spinning desktop thing is WAY cool. :-)

All this just to say that I think MOST of what astronomers
need to know about Macs can probably be found in a good
UNIX book. I highly recommend UNIX by Deborah S. Ray and
Eric J. Ray. This is one of the excellent Visual Quickstart
Guide books, which I have always found to be THE most
helpful in learning a new technical subject. They are
pitched a step above UNIX for Dummies, and a step below
UNIX in a Nutshell, and so perfect for much of what I've
wanted to know about UNIX.

I try to keep abreast of the Mac problems IDL programmers
run into, but not having a Mac myself (although my wife's
computer IS making strange noises these days, so who knows)
it is difficult for me to write from a particularly
knowledgeable point of view. Dr. Bowman seems the logical
one to me to take this job on, but I presume he has a
real job, too. :-)

Cheers,

David

--
David Fanning, Ph.D.
Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.
Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: http://www.dfanning.com/
Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")

Subject: Re: Mac Cursor
Posted by news.verizon.net on Sun, 05 Nov 2006 20:39:08 GMT
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David Fanning wrote:
>
> Having spent five weeks in Hawaii last year in the
> company of astronomers, I witnessed this dramatic
> enthusiasm for Macs, and also noted the almost
> universal inverse correlation of this enthusiasm

> with UNIX knowledge.

My experience is that the correlation you noted in Hawaii is anomaly,
and that the dramatic rise in Mac use among astronomers comes mainly
from defections from Linux users, who are already familiar with Unix.
My MacBook is arriving this week and I am leaving the Linux world with
some regret that its limitations (e.g. the expertise required to be a
system administrator & applications that never really matched those of
the Mac/PC world) couldn't be overcome.   The ability to run Unix on
a Mac for my compute-intensive scientific applications is its big
selling point for me (along with the ability to boot Windows if I need
to.)

Like Jeff Hester, I would also like to see a writeup and/or a forum on
making the the transition from Linux (or Windows) IDL to Mac IDL,
though right now I can't contribute much.   I do notice that if you
search the IDL tech tips (http://www.ittvis.com/services/search.asp)
for the Mac-Intel platform that you get a dozen recent tips.

> I would put Paul van Delst's name forward
> as someone who can provide insight into why a researcher
> loves a machine that crashes 10 times a day. I will
> say, however, that the spinning desktop thing is WAY cool. :-)

Nobody loves a machine that crashes 10 times a day but this does not
seem to be a general OS problem but limited to a particular laptop
model in a particular setup.   --Wayne

Subject: Re: Mac Cursor
Posted by JD Smith on Mon, 06 Nov 2006 17:58:38 GMT
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On Sat, 04 Nov 2006 08:58:08 -0700, David Fanning wrote:

> Jeff Hester writes:
>
>> In the world I live in -- Astronomy -- there is currently a dramatic
>> move away from PCs and Linux boxes to the Mac platform. I'm sure that
>> is the case more broadly as well. A compilation of Mac-related
>> questions/answers/discussion would probably be well-read. I'm not the
>> right person to maintain the list, but if I knew someone was keeping
>> track, I'd certainly contribute anything that I ran across.
>
> Having spent five weeks in Hawaii last year in the
> company of astronomers, I witnessed this dramatic
> enthusiasm for Macs, and also noted the almost
> universal inverse correlation of this enthusiasm

> with UNIX knowledge.

Actually, most astronomers are from a Sun/Solaris background, or, more
recently, Linux background [1], yet want a laptop that:

 a) Works well out of the box with no driver/kernel futzing.
 b) Runs Microsoft Office for those occasional yet unavoidable brushes
    with NASA HQ, the aerospace industry, etc. (where sending a
    complete Word document containing a single sentence with an agenda
    item is considered completely acceptable).
 c) Has support for all their favorite X11 tools, like DS9.
 d) Runs all of their accumulated C and/or FORTRAN code, usually
    compiled with GCC.
 e) iTunes, iChat, iMovie, iPhoto, iMaSuckerForPrettyApps.
 f) Has Apples' Keynote, for postscript/PDF-savvy presentations.

Macs do all of the above, though not without some compromises. And it
appears Apple knows this is a growing user segment, and occasionally
throws the sci-users a bone (Control-key remapping, virtual desktops
in Leopard: http://www.apple.com/macosx/leopard/spaces.html, etc.).

Though I don't know of an "IDL for Mac users" guide, there are several
astronomer-written guides for OSX converts, e.g.:

 http://satchmo.as.arizona.edu/~jrigby/osx.html

and links within.

JD

[1] Primarily differentiated by whether they remap the Control key to
    its God-given location, just left of the "a".

Subject: Re: Mac Cursor
Posted by David Fanning on Mon, 06 Nov 2006 18:31:32 GMT
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JD Smith writes:

> Actually, most astronomers are from a Sun/Solaris background

Ok, ok, Wayne and JD convince me astronomers know more
about their Macs than I give them credit for. I'll
make my argument more narrowly next time: almost
no one with a Mac in an IDL programming class can
figure out how to get a directory of perfectly
sensible IDL routines onto their IDL PATH. Maybe

that's an IDL problem. Probably is. But it seems
to be a Mac problem when the clock is ticking and
you know you still have to explain how to get
a yellow colored plot on your display by the first
lunch break. :-(

Cheers,

David

--
David Fanning, Ph.D.
Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.
Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: http://www.dfanning.com/
Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")

Subject: Re: Mac Cursor
Posted by K. Bowman on Mon, 06 Nov 2006 18:44:13 GMT
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In article <MPG.1fb6667cb76a3b3c989d98@news.frii.com>,
 David Fanning <news@dfanning.com> wrote:

> Dr. Bowman seems the logical one to me to take this
> job on, but I presume he has a real job, too. :-)

I have been thinking about trying to add some Mac-specific things to

   http://idl.tamu.edu/

but was afraid it might turn into the Department of Redundancy Department, as
there are other things out there already on other web sites, including David's
and ITTVIS's. (That is so much more awkward than saying RSI's.)

But, if there is interest, I will try to work on setting up a separate section
on idl.tamu.edu for Mac tips and tricks. There are currently just a couple of
things on

   http://idl.tamu.edu/downloads.php

I added a non-IDL "How To" this weekend on automatically downloading NWS weather
radar maps with curl and cron. Unix geeks will find this familiar, but many Mac
users (or Windows switchers) will not.

I'll need to reorganize the web site slightly to add a Mac section, so I'll let
everyone know when it is up and running.

Cheers, Ken Bowman

Subject: Re: Mac Cursor
Posted by K. Bowman on Mon, 06 Nov 2006 19:09:20 GMT

In article <MPG.1fb92d725da0e4f2989d9f@news.frii.com>,
 David Fanning <news@dfanning.com> wrote:

> JD Smith writes:
>
>> Actually, most astronomers are from a Sun/Solaris background
>
> Ok, ok, Wayne and JD convince me astronomers know more
> about their Macs than I give them credit for. I'll
> make my argument more narrowly next time: almost
> no one with a Mac in an IDL programming class can
> figure out how to get a directory of perfectly
> sensible IDL routines onto their IDL PATH. Maybe
> that's an IDL problem. Probably is. But it seems
> to be a Mac problem when the clock is ticking and
> you know you still have to explain how to get
> a yellow colored plot on your display by the first
> lunch break. :-(
>
> Cheers,
>
> David

David, do you use the IDLDE on Macs, or do you run from the
command line?

I run from the command line and use a startup.pro file. In order
to set the !PATH variable right, you have to get the paths right.
A very handy trick for doing this in OS X is the following:

1. Have a Terminal window open. (That's Terminal.app, not an xterm.)
2. In the Finder, navigate to the file or directory that you want to use.
3. Drag the file or directory into the Terminal window. Presto, the full
   path appears.
4. Copy and paste that path into the startup.pro.

You can enter a Unix command like "ls" before dragging and dropping:

bowman> ls /Volumes/csrpd1/1B01/V6/2004/200409/20040905/
1B01.040905.38795.6.HDF   1B01.040905.38801.6.HDF   1B01.040905.38807.6.HDF

1B01.040905.38796.6.HDF	1B01.040905.38802.6.HDF	1B01.040905.38808.6.HDF
1B01.040905.38797.6.HDF	1B01.040905.38803.6.HDF	1B01.040905.38809.6.HDF
1B01.040905.38798.6.HDF	1B01.040905.38804.6.HDF	1B01.040906.38810.6.HDF
1B01.040905.38799.6.HDF	1B01.040905.38805.6.HDF	
1B01.040905.38800.6.HDF	1B01.040905.38806.6.HDF	

In IDL I can also do things like this interactively:

IDL> in = '/Volumes/csrpd1/PROGSCI/v4/502rf05/502rf05.nc'
IDL> id = ncdf_open(in)

That is, type "in = '" at the IDL prompt. Drag and drop the file of interest.
Add the final quote. Hit return.

I guess that will go on the tips and tricks list. :-)

Ken

Subject: Re: Mac Cursor
Posted by David Fanning on Tue, 07 Nov 2006 05:16:36 GMT
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Kenneth Bowman writes:

> David, do you use the IDLDE on Macs, or do you run from the
> command line?

Uh, have you *seen* IDLDE on a Mac!? No, almost everyone
prefers to run from a command line. :-)

> I run from the command line and use a startup.pro file. In order
> to set the !PATH variable right, you have to get the paths right.
> A very handy trick for doing this in OS X is the following:
>
> 1. Have a Terminal window open. (That's Terminal.app, not an xterm.)
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> 1B01.040905.38796.6.HDF   1B01.040905.38802.6.HDF   1B01.040905.38808.6.HDF
> 1B01.040905.38797.6.HDF   1B01.040905.38803.6.HDF   1B01.040905.38809.6.HDF

> 1B01.040905.38798.6.HDF   1B01.040905.38804.6.HDF   1B01.040906.38810.6.HDF
> 1B01.040905.38799.6.HDF   1B01.040905.38805.6.HDF
> 1B01.040905.38800.6.HDF   1B01.040905.38806.6.HDF
>
>
> In IDL I can also do things like this interactively:
>
> IDL> in = '/Volumes/csrpd1/PROGSCI/v4/502rf05/502rf05.nc'
> IDL> id = ncdf_open(in)
>
> That is, type "in = '" at the IDL prompt. Drag and drop the file of interest.
> Add the final quote. Hit return.
>
> I guess that will go on the tips and tricks list. :-)

Very useful information. Thank you.

Cheers,

David
--
David Fanning, Ph.D.
Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.
Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: http://www.dfanning.com/
Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")

Subject: Re: Mac Cursor
Posted by Paul Van Delst[1] on Tue, 07 Nov 2006 19:21:39 GMT
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David Fanning wrote:
> Jeff Hester writes:
>
>> In the world I live in -- Astronomy -- there is currently a dramatic
>> move away from PCs and Linux boxes to the Mac platform. I'm sure that
>> is the case more broadly as well. A compilation of Mac-related
>> questions/answers/discussion would probably be well-read. I'm not the
>> right person to maintain the list, but if I knew someone was keeping
>> track, I'd certainly contribute anything that I ran across.
>
> Having spent five weeks in Hawaii last year in the
> company of astronomers, I witnessed this dramatic
> enthusiasm for Macs, and also noted the almost
> universal inverse correlation of this enthusiasm
> with UNIX knowledge.

That's probably not a problem because OSX is not a true Unix. For a start, it's not truly

case sensitive. I mean, jeez! I have a subversion repository directory (built from my
linux desktop) that contains my current, brain dead error handler "Message_Handler.f90" as
well as a not-ready-for-prime-time stack-based error handler module "message_handler.f90".
When I check out that directory, all hell breaks loose on my mac coz it can't tell the
difference between the two.

> I think we can attribute much of this to the brilliant
> Mac/PC advertisements we see on TV. I can't say why
> astronomers are especially susceptible to this kind of
> advertising, but it would be an interesting thesis topic
> for someone. I would put Paul van Delst's name forward
> as someone who can provide insight into why a researcher
> loves a machine that crashes 10 times a day.

Love? Love? Who said anything about love? :o) Chalk it up to finally caving in to see what
all the noise was about.

But, when it does work, it works very well. Nice and fast. :o)

paulv

--
Paul van Delst   Ride lots.
CIMSS @ NOAA/NCEP/EMC   Eddy Merckx
Ph: (301)763-8000 x7748
Fax:(301)763-8545

Subject: Re: Mac Cursor
Posted by Paul Van Delst[1] on Tue, 07 Nov 2006 19:32:10 GMT
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Wayne Landsman wrote:
> David Fanning wrote:
>
>> I would put Paul van Delst's name forward
>> as someone who can provide insight into why a researcher
>> loves a machine that crashes 10 times a day. I will
>> say, however, that the spinning desktop thing is WAY cool. :-)
>
> Nobody loves a machine that crashes 10 times a day but this does not
> seem to be a general OS problem but limited to a particular laptop
> model in a particular setup.   --Wayne

Wayne has it right there. The "new" macbook pro's are AFAICT the only ones suffering en
masse from this type of problem - but it's not universal. I got mine in April/May 2006 - I
haven't checked to see if it's only Intel-chipped mbps that are wobbly. Powerbooks,
iBooks, G4s or whatever the earlier versions/incarnations were called appear to be very

reliable. Hopefully the "newer" macbook pros incorporate any fixes.

paulv

--
Paul van Delst   Ride lots.
CIMSS @ NOAA/NCEP/EMC   Eddy Merckx
Ph: (301)763-8000 x7748
Fax:(301)763-8545

Subject: Re: Mac Cursor
Posted by K. Bowman on Tue, 07 Nov 2006 19:35:55 GMT
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In article <eiqmc3vhu1@news.nems.noaa.gov>,
 Paul van Delst <Paul.vanDelst@noaa.gov> wrote:

> That's probably not a problem because OSX is not a true Unix. For a start, it's not truly
> case sensitive. I mean, jeez! I have a subversion repository directory (built from my
> linux desktop) that contains my current, brain dead error handler "Message_Handler.f90" as
> well as a not-ready-for-prime-time stack-based error handler module "message_handler.f90".
> When I check out that directory, all hell breaks loose on my mac coz it can't tell the
> difference between the two.

Case-sensitivity is a property of the filesystem. OS X supports several options there,
including standard Unix UFS, MS-DOS, and several flavors of the Mac "native" filesystem,
HFS.

When you initialize/partition a disk with HFS you can choose journaled/non-journaled
and case-sensitive/non-case-sensitive. Unfortately, in 10.4 you cannot use a case-
sensitive volume as a boot volume. I expect that will change in 10.5 (next spring),
along with full 64-bitness. I currently create my external volumes as case-sensitive.

By the way, HFS is case-preserving, but not case-sensitive, so you can end up with
confusion when you have file names that differ only in case.

This is a hassle, but Apple has been moving to change their legacy non-case-sensitive
filesystem to fully case-sensitive. (In my experience newbies are often quite confused
by case-sensitive systems, so there are some arguments for that approach.)

There are faint rumors that Apple might provide a "modern" filesystem such as ZFS
as an option, but no firm info.

Ken Bowman

On Mon, 06 Nov 2006 22:16:36 -0700, David Fanning wrote:

> Kenneth Bowman writes:
>
>> David, do you use the IDLDE on Macs, or do you run from the
>> command line?
>
> Uh, have you *seen* IDLDE on a Mac!? No, almost everyone
> prefers to run from a command line. :-)

After dealing with Mac-based path peculiarities (Ken, covering the
slightly different environment setup is a must for your FAQ site),
IDLWAVE in Carbon or X11 Emacs works great.

I would guess most people's IDL OSX path problems arise from running
the IDLDE or Emacs+IDLWAVE from the OSX dock, /Applications directory,
or some other launcher, after having setup their the environment
variable IDL_PATH in .login/.bashrc/.cshrc.

In Linux, starting IDLDE from the window manager works fine, because
there is an initial login shell which is loaded "above" the window
manager, which reads these shell config files and modifies the global
environment. Under OSX, this isn't the case. Things in .cshrc, for
instance, will only affect the environment of programs run from the
terminal where that shell is running. To modify the global
environment, you need to use environment.plist.

The easiest way to modify the IDL_PATH on this plist file is to use
the "defaults" command:

% mkdir .MacOSX
% defaults write ~/.MacOSX/environment IDL_PATH "'<IDL_DEFAULT>:+${HOME}/idl'"

and then logout and back in again. Please note the nested quotes
(necessary because of all the <+: noise). Now IDL_PATH will be set
for all processes, whether they are started from the terminal or not.
You can always remove it like:

% defaults delete ~/.MacOSX/environment IDL_PATH

Note that IDL provides its own, separate "preferences" system which
can include things like the IDL_PATH. You can interact with this from
IDLDE, or even the IDL command line. This would be another option for
modifying the IDL_PATH.

JD

___

Quoth JD Smith:

> Actually, most astronomers are from a Sun/Solaris background, or, more
> recently, Linux background [1], yet want a laptop that:
>
> a) Works well out of the box with no driver/kernel futzing.

In this category, but worth it's own mention, is the ability to connect
practically any projector and have it JUST WORK, out of the box. This
never happened with my linux laptop.

Not experienced any of the Macbook Pro crashes. Mine has been pretty
rock solid.

Major pet peeve, though, is the lack of highlight-copy and
middle-click-paste in OSX. 5 months after switching, it STILL catches me
out. doh!

Then Quoth David Fanning:

> JD Smith writes:
>
>> Actually, most astronomers are from a Sun/Solaris background
>
> Ok, ok, Wayne and JD convince me astronomers know more about their Macs
> than I give them credit for. I'll make my argument more narrowly next
> time: almost no one with a Mac in an IDL programming class can figure
> out how to get a directory of perfectly sensible IDL routines onto their
> IDL PATH. Maybe that's an IDL problem. Probably is. But it seems to be a

This seems partly an OSX problem, too. I run idl command line, from within
CarbonEmacs using idlwave. So I can't just set the IDL_PATH var in my
.bashrc. I discovered that OSX Apps launched by clicking an icon do not
pick up any environment vars defined in .bashrc et al. So none of my
.bashrc.idlpath definitions are read. The best work-around I could find is
to "open /Applications/Emacs.app" from an iTerm.

cheers
chris

___

Subject: Re: Mac Cursor
Posted by Paul Van Delst[1] on Wed, 08 Nov 2006 20:58:51 GMT

Christopher Thom wrote:
> Quoth JD Smith:
>
>> Actually, most astronomers are from a Sun/Solaris background, or, more
>> recently, Linux background [1], yet want a laptop that:
>>
>>   a) Works well out of the box with no driver/kernel futzing.
>
> In this category, but worth it's own mention, is the ability to connect
> practically any projector and have it JUST WORK, out of the box. This
> *never* happened with my linux laptop.
>
> Not experienced any of the Macbook Pro crashes. Mine has been pretty
> rock solid.
>
> Major pet peeve, though, is the lack of highlight-copy and
> middle-click-paste in OSX. 5 months after switching, it STILL catches me
> out. doh!

That drives me nuts too. In my linux system window focus follows my mouse. I haven't yet
figured out how to get that to work on my Mac (I know it's possible... somehow) and I'll
move my mouse to my target window and start typing, only to have it appear in the window I
was just "in". Argh.

paulv

--
Paul van Delst   Ride lots.
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Ph: (301)763-8000 x7748
Fax:(301)763-8545

Subject: Re: Mac Cursor
Posted by Christopher Thom on Wed, 08 Nov 2006 23:12:17 GMT

Quoth Paul van Delst:

> Christopher Thom wrote:
>> Major pet peeve, though, is the lack of highlight-copy and
>> middle-click-paste in OSX. 5 months after switching, it STILL catches me
>> out. doh!
>

> That drives me nuts too. In my linux system window focus follows my mouse. I
> haven't yet figured out how to get that to work on my Mac (I know it's
> possible... somehow) and I'll move my mouse to my target window and start
> typing, only to have it appear in the window I was just "in". Argh.

you can get focus-follows-mouse behaviour with mondomouse software. It's
not free though:
http://www.atomicbird.com/mondomouse/

I tried it out, but it's not *true* focus-follows-mouse behavious, because
it always raises the new active window. i.e. you can't turn off the
autoraise feature.

Incidentally, you CAN get this feature with Terminal.app (and only
terminal, sadly):
defaults write com.apple.Terminal FocusFollowsMouse -string YES

cheers
chris

Subject: Re: Mac Cursor
Posted by Paul Van Delst[1] on Wed, 08 Nov 2006 23:27:12 GMT

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Christopher Thom wrote:
> Quoth Paul van Delst:
>
>> Christopher Thom wrote:
>>> Major pet peeve, though, is the lack of highlight-copy and
>>> middle-click-paste in OSX. 5 months after switching, it STILL catches me
>>> out. doh!
>> That drives me nuts too. In my linux system window focus follows my mouse. I
>> haven't yet figured out how to get that to work on my Mac (I know it's
>> possible... somehow) and I'll move my mouse to my target window and start
>> typing, only to have it appear in the window I was just "in". Argh.
>
> you can get focus-follows-mouse behaviour with mondomouse software. It's
> not free though:
> http://www.atomicbird.com/mondomouse/

Yeah, my "local" mac user group members pointed out several options - an all of them
involved installing software (free and $$). I was (am) amazed - isn't this sort of thing a
basic need?

> I tried it out, but it's not *true* focus-follows-mouse behavious, because
> it always raises the new active window. i.e. you can't turn off the
> autoraise feature.

Ah - and turning off autoraise is the second thing I always do on linux boxes (after setting the focus-follows-mouse). I like to have my IDL display windows always be on top while I type commands into the IDL command line. When I need big displays and screen real estate is an issue, focus-follows mouse + no-autoraise lets me have a large window and a couple of visible lines of a terminal peeking out the bottom for IDL command entry.

> Incidentally, you CAN get this feature with Terminal.app (and only
> terminal, sadly):
> defaults write com.apple.Terminal FocusFollowsMouse -string YES

Well, actually, for now that is a *huge* help. Thanks very much for the tip.

paulv

--
Paul van Delst   Ride lots.
CIMSS @ NOAA/NCEP/EMC   Eddy Merckx
Ph: (301)763-8000 x7748
Fax:(301)763-8545

Subject: Re: Mac Cursor
Posted by Christopher Thom on Wed, 08 Nov 2006 23:42:38 GMT
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Quoth Paul van Delst:

> Christopher Thom wrote:
>
> Yeah, my "local" mac user group members pointed out several options - an
> all of them involved installing software (free and $$). I was (am)
> amazed - isn't this sort of thing a basic need?

Astoundingly, ex-unix nerds are not apple's primary demographic. :-)

> Ah - and turning off autoraise is the second thing I always do on linux
> boxes (after setting the focus-follows-mouse). I like to have my IDL
> display windows always be on top while I type commands into the IDL
> command line. When I need big displays and screen real estate is an
> issue, focus-follows mouse + no-autoraise lets me have a large window
> and a couple of visible lines of a terminal peeking out the bottom for
> IDL command entry.

try the IDL command "wshow". This raises the plot window, but focus remains on the IDL session. At least, it works for me on my MBP, running IDL through emacs.

>> Incidentally, you CAN get this feature with Terminal.app (and only
>> terminal, sadly): defaults write com.apple.Terminal FocusFollowsMouse
>
> Well, actually, for now that is a *huge* help. Thanks very much for the tip.

No worries. I don't use Terminal.app, but i just tested -- you get the
desired behavious *without* autoraise! So apparently it's possible in the
OSX WM. Now if apple would just make that a system preference along with
highlight-copy....

cheers
chris

Subject: Re: Mac Cursor
Posted by JD Smith on Wed, 08 Nov 2006 23:46:43 GMT
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On Wed, 08 Nov 2006 14:06:33 -0600, Christopher Thom wrote:

> Major pet peeve, though, is the lack of highlight-copy and
> middle-click-paste in OSX. 5 months after switching, it STILL catches me
> out. doh!

I hear that. The corollary though is that the annoyance of highlighting
to copy, but before you reach your destination, highlighting something
else, thus losing your clipboard contents, is completely absent on a Mac.

> Then Quoth David Fanning:
>
>> JD Smith writes:
>>
>>> Actually, most astronomers are from a Sun/Solaris background
>>
>> Ok, ok, Wayne and JD convince me astronomers know more about their Macs
>> than I give them credit for. I'll make my argument more narrowly next
>> time: almost no one with a Mac in an IDL programming class can figure
>> out how to get a directory of perfectly sensible IDL routines onto their
>> IDL PATH. Maybe that's an IDL problem. Probably is. But it seems to be a
>
> This seems partly an OSX problem, too. I run idl command line, from within
> CarbonEmacs using idlwave. So I can't just set the IDL_PATH var in my
> .bashrc. I discovered that OSX Apps launched by clicking an icon do not
> pick up any environment vars defined in .bashrc et al. So none of my
> .bashrc.idlpath definitions are read. The best work-around I could find is
> to "open /Applications/Emacs.app" from an iTerm.

See my other post: environment.plist is your friend. BTW, I'm putting the

final touches on IDLWAVE v6.1 to be shipped with Emacs 22. Should be a
nice and stable IDLWAVE environment "out of the box".

JD

Subject: Re: Mac Cursor
Posted by JD Smith on Wed, 08 Nov 2006 23:51:13 GMT
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On Wed, 08 Nov 2006 17:12:17 -0600, Christopher Thom wrote:

> Quoth Paul van Delst:
>
>> Christopher Thom wrote:
>>> Major pet peeve, though, is the lack of highlight-copy and
>>> middle-click-paste in OSX. 5 months after switching, it STILL catches me
>>> out. doh!
>>
>> That drives me nuts too. In my linux system window focus follows my mouse. I
>> haven't yet figured out how to get that to work on my Mac (I know it's
>> possible... somehow) and I'll move my mouse to my target window and start
>> typing, only to have it appear in the window I was just "in". Argh.
>
> you can get focus-follows-mouse behaviour with mondomouse software. It's
> not free though:
> http://www.atomicbird.com/mondomouse/
>
> I tried it out, but it's not *true* focus-follows-mouse behavious, because
> it always raises the new active window. i.e. you can't turn off the
> autoraise feature.

The top menu bar ensures FFM will never really work with the Mac. Say
you have several windows from different apps. You move up to select a
menu item, but before you get there, brush across a window of another
app, and its menu is selected. Oops.

I find you need to reorient somewhat. I'm so used to switching focus
between terminals and Emacs windows by flicking the mouse, that it's
taken me a while to learn Apple-Tab, no mouse movement at all, for the
same result. For me, it's actually a bit faster (if less flexible).
This doesn't help for windows within one app, but for Terminal and X11
I do use FFM, and that covers most cases.

JD

Subject: Re: Mac Cursor
Posted by JD Smith on Wed, 08 Nov 2006 23:57:11 GMT
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On Wed, 08 Nov 2006 17:42:38 -0600, Christopher Thom wrote:

> No worries. I don't use Terminal.app, but i just tested -- you get the
> desired behavious *without* autoraise! So apparently it's possible in the
> OSX WM. Now if apple would just make that a system preference along with
> highlight-copy....

Actually, it's a pretty crummy hack (which I can't do without). Try
opening a Terminal properties pane when you have several terminals
open, and mouse around. It switches randomly between. If its across
the screen, good luck playing a non-fun version of "Operation" to
mouse over without touching any other terminals. Similar weirdness
occurs even when Terminal isn't the active app: it's windows can still
steal keyboard focus. Sometimes this is useful, other times,
frustrating. I'm afraid FFM will always be a horrible hack on OSX,
thanks to the top-level menu bar. The only real option is to learn
new tricks.

JD

Subject: Re: Mac Cursor
Posted by David Fanning on Thu, 09 Nov 2006 00:11:23 GMT
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JD Smith writes:

> The only real option is to learn new tricks.

Ken, are you writing all of this down? Put you best
ads on this page. It is going to be download a LOT! :-)

Cheers,

David
--
David Fanning, Ph.D.
Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.
Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: http://www.dfanning.com/
Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")

Subject: Re: Mac Cursor

JD Smith wrote:
> On Wed, 08 Nov 2006 17:12:17 -0600, Christopher Thom wrote:
>
>> Quoth Paul van Delst:
>>
>>> Christopher Thom wrote:
>>>> Major pet peeve, though, is the lack of highlight-copy and
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> The top menu bar ensures FFM will never really work with the Mac. Say
> you have several windows from different apps. You move up to select a
> menu item, but before you get there, brush across a window of another
> app, and its menu is selected. Oops.

I have zero knowledge of computer work-environment on-screen ergonomics, but the concept
of a *single* top-menu bar like on Apples totally befuddles me[*]. Typically I have about,
oh I dunno, 15 or so windows open at any one time (in linux they are nicely organised on
10 separate desktops) and, not being a hot-key type of person, the fact that I have to
move the mouse all the way over to the top left to access the menu also drives me nuts. I
have one of those ridiculously large cinema displays and I'm wearing a patch through the
finish on my desk racking up those mouse-miles.

However, as you said in another post, you have to learn new tricks with a Mac. For me
these are starting to "sink in" and productivity is picking up. :o) Luckily my editor of
choice (nedit) is an X11 app so it still retains its grip on its own menu bar!

I should thank the newsgroup for putting up with my rants on this highly off-topic
subject. It's been cathartic, I thank you again, and I will now stop. :o)

cheers,

paulv

[*] I'll ignore for now the fact that apple windows only have *one* corner (I mean,

really, what the hell?) where you can grab and resize.

--
Paul van Delst   Ride lots.
CIMSS @ NOAA/NCEP/EMC   Eddy Merckx
Ph: (301)763-8000 x7748
Fax:(301)763-8545

Subject: Re: Mac Cursor
Posted by JD Smith on Thu, 09 Nov 2006 01:01:25 GMT
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On Wed, 08 Nov 2006 19:28:12 -0500, Paul van Delst wrote:

> JD Smith wrote:
>> On Wed, 08 Nov 2006 17:12:17 -0600, Christopher Thom wrote:
>>
>>> Quoth Paul van Delst:
>>>
>>>> Christopher Thom wrote:
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>>>> > middle-click-paste in OSX. 5 months after switching, it STILL catches me
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> 10 separate desktops) and, not being a hot-key type of person, the fact that I have to
> move the mouse all the way over to the top left to access the menu also drives me nuts. I
> have one of those ridiculously large cinema displays and I'm wearing a patch through the
> finish on my desk racking up those mouse-miles.

Shortcuts are good. I think the concept is the "File" menu will
always be in the same place, so muscle memory will eventually make you
very efficient. They broke this somewhat with OSX by making a
variable width "Application Name" menu first. It doesn't scale quite
as well to 30" monitors either. Leopard will add desktops (called
"Spaces") which will be a welcome addition.

If you are feeling as though your productivity has taken a hit, try
out QuickSilver to hold over your Linux friends. It has a steep
learning curve, and is definitely somewhat mysterious, but it is a
powerful, frightening beast when mastered. I know people who frame
almost all operations on their Macs as QuickSilver commands (I am
still a yellow-belt).

 http://quicksilver.blacktree.com/

You'll want to read the various tutorials.

JD

Subject: Re: Mac Cursor
Posted by Kenneth P. Bowman on Thu, 09 Nov 2006 02:44:06 GMT
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In article <eitsmt$t1b$1@news.nems.noaa.gov>,
 Paul van Delst <Paul.vanDelst@noaa.gov> wrote:

> I have zero knowledge of computer work-environment on-screen ergonomics, but the concept
> of a *single* top-menu bar like on Apples totally befuddles me[*]. Typically I have about,
> oh I dunno, 15 or so windows open at any one time (in linux they are nicely organised on
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> move the mouse all the way over to the top left to access the menu also drives me nuts. I
> have one of those ridiculously large cinema displays and I'm wearing a patch through the
> finish on my desk racking up those mouse-miles.

I'm not an expert either, but I think this has a good ergonomic/user interface basis,
particularly as displays get larger. With only a single menu at the top, rather than
multiple menus attached to windows, it is easy to "throw" the mouse to the menu because
it has a "hard" edge. That avoids PIO's (pilot induced oscillations) as you try to
center on a point. Additionally, it is very consistent. You don't have to find
menus that are scattered around the display. The "Edit" menu is always in exactly
the same place. That's why all Apple menus are Apple ... App name ... File ... Edit ...

You can adjust the acceleration on your mouse so that small motions are sensitive
and large motions are quick (see the Mouse System Preferences panel). Some third party
mice include drivers that let you tune the acceleration curve. I use a standard-sized

mouse pad and don't have to leave the pad to navigate my cinema display.

OS X 10.5 will include multiple desktops. There are a couple of commercial utilities to do multiple desktops now, but I don't use them. I prefer to use the Hide command (cmd-H except in those damn Adobe applications) to hide apps I am not currently using. Also, cmd-M will minimize an individual menu.

Some people really like the Expose hot keys to shrink various sets of windows, but I find the shrunken windows hard to see.

> However, as you said in another post, you have to learn new tricks with a Mac. For me
> these are starting to "sink in" and productivity is picking up. :o) Luckily my editor of
> choice (nedit) is an X11 app so it still retains its grip on its own menu bar!

Give Textwrangler a try (barebones.com). It is free and very well thought out. Designed by programmers for programmers.

> [*] I'll ignore for now the fact that apple windows only have *one* corner (I mean,
> really, what the hell?) where you can grab and resize.

I like the fact that the user interface is visually cleaner and doesn't waste pixels around the edges of every window, but maybe I'm rationalizing. It does sometimes mean: move the window, then resize.

Another short tip. Start Terminal.app. Open a set of windows and arrange them in a neat stack (whatever arrangement you prefer). I like windows that are about 100 columns by 45 rows. Select save from the file menu. Change the pop-up menu to "All windows". Check "Open this file when Terminal starts up." Save it someplace handy. Now, whenever you start Terminal.app, it will automatically open a neat stack of empty windows.

Cheers, Ken

Subject: Re: Mac Cursor
Posted by Kenneth P. Bowman on Thu, 09 Nov 2006 02:46:02 GMT
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In article <MPG.1fbc201773ff8ed3989daf@news.frii.com>,
 David Fanning <news@dfanning.com> wrote:

> JD Smith writes:
>
>> The only real option is to learn new tricks.
>
> Ken, are you writing all of this down? Put you best
> ads on this page. It is going to be download a LOT! :-)
>

> Cheers,
>
> David

I'm making notes, but I don't guarantee that I'll get it all.

Cheers, Ken

Subject: Re: Mac Cursor
Posted by Edd Edmondson on Thu, 09 Nov 2006 11:08:51 GMT
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Paul van Delst <Paul.vanDelst@noaa.gov> wrote:
> That drives me nuts too. In my linux system window focus follows my mouse. I haven't yet
> figured out how to get that to work on my Mac (I know it's possible... somehow) and I'll
> move my mouse to my target window and start typing, only to have it appear in the window I
> was just "in". Argh.

There are several almost-solutions around, but perhaps the easiest is
going to be, when you're working with X11 windows, to just go to X11
in full screen mode with a window manager that does FFM properly.

By the way, there's a small bunch of tip sites around of which I have
one, so if anyone does compile a list of things from this thread and
IDL-related links drop me an email and I'll add a link to it.

Rather than shamelessly link my own (which will probably get moved at
some point this week anyway) I'll recommend this page -
http://cfa-www.harvard.edu/~nridge/osxastro/ - which also points you
to a very handy mailing list (low traffic too, so won't clog your
inbox).

--
Edd

Subject: Re: Mac Cursor
Posted by James Kuyper on Thu, 09 Nov 2006 11:37:23 GMT
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Christopher Thom wrote:
> Quoth Paul van Delst:
>
>> Christopher Thom wrote:
>>
>> Yeah, my "local" mac user group members pointed out several options - an

>> all of them involved installing software (free and $$). I was (am)
>> amazed - isn't this sort of thing a basic need?
>
> Astoundingly, ex-unix nerds are not apple's primary demographic. :-)

This isn't a question about why apple doesn't accommodate the peculiar
desires of ex-unix nerds. The question is about why apple considers
focus-follows-mouse to be a peculiar thing for them to desire. It's a
pretty basic thing, which I'd expect to be at least an easily supported
option on all windowing systems within no more than a decade of the
time that it was first supported by any windowing system (and that was
a lot earlier than a decade ago).

Subject: Re: Mac Cursor
Posted by Christopher Thom on Thu, 09 Nov 2006 19:47:06 GMT
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Quoth JD Smith:

> If you are feeling as though your productivity has taken a hit, try out
> QuickSilver to hold over your Linux friends. It has a steep learning
> curve, and is definitely somewhat mysterious, but it is a powerful,
> frightening beast when mastered. I know people who frame almost all
> operations on their Macs as QuickSilver commands (I am still a
> yellow-belt).
>
> http://quicksilver.blacktree.com/

I was introduced to quicksilver soon after I got my mac and I LOVE it! It
makes so many things so much more efficient. Between QS and expose, I feel
constricted and frustrated whenever I end up back on linux boxes...

cheers
chris