
Subject: closed contour paths: clockwise or anticlockwise - or actually a mixture?

Posted by [George.millward](#) on Fri, 03 Jan 2014 20:53:44 GMT

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Hi there,

I'm doing some very straightforward contour plotting - but instead of actually plotting the contours - I'm writing out the path data of closed contours by using the path_info and path_xy keywords.

This is all working fine, but I have a problem: Some of the contour paths (written out as x,y arrays) close in a clockwise order, some close in an anticlockwise order. This is causing trouble when I export the paths to other mapping software because the latter is strictly wanting the paths to always be clockwise.....

Does anyone have any insight into this? Is there some keyword I am missing?
alternatively is there a simple way to establish whether a path is clockwise or anticlockwise so the arrays can be reversed if necessary?

Cheers

George.

Subject: Re: closed contour paths: clockwise or anticlockwise - or actually a mixture?

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Fri, 03 Jan 2014 21:01:23 GMT

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George.millward@yahoo.com writes:

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when I export the paths to other mapping software because the latter is strictly wanting the paths
to always be clockwise.....

This seems unlikely. Are you sure you are not confusing the high and low
contours? In other words, one path describes a mound, the other path
describes a hole. The normal should be pointing toward you in the
counterclockwise (mound) contour, and away from you in the clockwise
(hole) contour.

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.")

Subject: Re: closed contour paths: clockwise or anticlockwise - or actually a mixture?

Posted by [George.millward](#) on Fri, 03 Jan 2014 21:13:57 GMT

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On Friday, January 3, 2014 2:01:23 PM UTC-7, David Fanning wrote:

> George.millward@yahoo.com writes:

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> David
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> --
>
> David Fanning, Ph.D.
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>
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David,

Aha - I think that's it. Thanks. I think a contour that is 'high' (above it's surroundings) is written in clockwise order - but if it is a 'hole' it is written in anti-clockwise order. Is that your understanding?

[For anyone trying to follow this thread the relevant parameter here is `path_info.high_low`]

Cheers

George.
