Birdie Prefs documentation

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Birdie Prefs documentation

1.1   Birdie Prefs Documentation v1.2.4 (13/06/98)

Welcome to the Birdie Prefs documentation.

Birdie Prefs 1.27 for Birdie 1.5

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1.2   Introduction

Birdie is a hack that gives you datatypes loaded patterns in the window border of windows open on the default public screen (WB) {or all screens, if you set the 'PublicScreens' flag)

Get it on http://www.vgr.com/birdie/

Birdie has a command line interface, see Birdie.doc, and Birdie Prefs provides a preferences interface to spare you to edit your Startup-Sequence or your User-Startup.

Birdie Prefs has the following features:

* It uses a configuration file (see usage for some information to set it up), which makes the loading/saving very fast.

* You can test a configuration without exiting Birdie Prefs with the 'Test' button

* When you change the configuration, Birdie is broken and started again so that you can see the results at once (although there are some seconds to wait because Birdie must load the patterns)

* Mui interface

* Public Domain and source included

* Localised ; Currently available languages are English, French and Swedish.

1.3   Distribution

* Birdie Prefs is Public Domain, so you can use and spread it as much as you want without limitations.

(Although I do not want you to spread it (e.g. as shareware) and say it is your work ;-).

* Birdie Prefs is written in AmigaE. Source code included, in the Source drawer. (You can mail me if you have suggestions to improve it or if you found a bug in it..)

* I do not take ANY responsibility if it destroys your computer, if it erases your hard disk or anything else.

But say me if something annoying like this happened, so I could try to remove the problem and avoid other hard disks to be erased ;-)

(But note that I have tested this program for some time without problems, so).

I did never encounter problems with Birdie Prefs, but can't be sure that Birdie Prefs is perfectely safe.

* You can send comments and/or suggestions to me (maxime@intelcom.ch) if you want.

1.4   Usage

INSTALLATION

* Birdie must be launched in your user-startup like this:

run >NIL: Birdie ? <Env:Birdie.prefs

Explanation:

run is to avoid to freeze the computer.

>NIL: just to prevent any «[CLI 12]» or other outputs

Birdie: well, this is to start the program.

?   prints the «ACTIVEPATTERN/S,PATTERNS/M,NODRAW/S,NOBITMAPS/S,...:» to the shell (but without displaying it because of <NIL:>), and waits an input. (the arguments)

<Env:Birdie.prefs This gives the arguments found in Env:Birdie.prefs (the configuration file of Birdie Prefs) to Birdie. When Birdie recieves this input, it executes itself with those arguments.

Birdie Prefs doesn't anymore have to seek the startup scripts, it reads/write this prefs file.

* Birdie must be in your path when you run Birdie Prefs, the two most easy ways to do it are:

Either put the Birdie executable in the same directory than Birdie Prefs

Or put Birdie in C: or any other path that has been sent to path.

It would be possible to do so:

run >NIL: Birdie ? <Env:Birdie.prefs

Path work:System/Birdie

with Birdie in work:system/birdie/ and Birdie Prefs anywere

But I do not think it is a good idea.

* Note: the executable is 'bprefs' but you have to run the script because it sends Birdie Prefs an argument, see below.

* If you have a message 'Couldn't overwrite file env:birdie.prefs' when you press use or save (click on 'Wait' to remove it), you'll have to edit the startup script:

The line in 'Birdie Prefs' is:

BPrefs <delay>

The bigger that <delay> is, the longer Birdie Prefs will try to access env:birdie.prefs before popping up a message.

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INTERFACE

Explanation of the groups: (See Birdie docs for more information about the settings)

* Light/Dark Balance: These three sliders allow you to set how the light/dark effect (15 bit or better screen mode only!) will look like. if you put a value near from zero the effect will be hard to see, if you put e.g. -80 for Red, -80 for Green and 0 for Blue, the pattern will be darker and a blue within the shaded part of the window.

* Patternlist:The list of the patterns used for the unselected windows. Use the button 'Add' to add an entry at the end of the list, 'Delete' to delete the current entry and 'View' to view it using Multiview. When a window is opened, Birdie chooses a random pattern from the list and

* Active window: This lets you set how the Active window will look like.

If the 'Active' checkmark is unselected, the pattern will be exactly the same than the unactive windows (You can put e.g. a different text colour in the 'Palette' preferences to see what is the current selected window, like white for the selected window and black for the others).

There are two possibles settings:

· Active Pattern that puts a completely different pattern for the selected window (press the 'V' button to view the picture)

· Active colour that sets a colour variation between the selected and the unselected window. (You can e.g. make the selected window a little more white, like if it were lit). The 'ImposeLevel' slider lets you choose the percentage: 0% makes the selected window look exactly like the unselected ones and 100% makes it completely of the colour you selected. The default setting is 50%, the middle.

* Options:Please read the Birdie.doc for explanations about these switches.

* Save: This writes the change to your startup script (if no Birdie command was found at the beginning of the program, Birdie Prefs writes a new entry at the end of your User-Startup. You can see the changes at once.

* Use: Like save but it doesn't save to the disk.

(See above if you get the 'Couldn't overwrite env:birdie.prefs' message)

* Test: Like use but doesn't quit the program neither save the settings to ENV:

* Cancel: Forgets all the changes you've made and exits. Same effect than

the Close gadget on the top left of the window.

See also: Menus

1.5 Menus of Birdie Prefs

When you press right button over a gadget (currently the patternlist and active window settings have not this menu), the preferences menu is also available, but will only act on the gadget (or group) right under the pointer.

THE PROJECT MENU

About A ?

Provides some information about Birdie Prefs.

About MUI A '

Pops up the MUI about requester.

MUI settings A P

This item lets you configure the look of Birdie Prefs. Read the MUI documentation for details about using the MUI preference program.

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Save A S

This is like the 'Save' button of the {"Window" link usage}. It does save your changes to disk and displays them.

Use A U

This is like the 'Use' button of the Interface . Sends changes to Birdie and exits.

Test A T

Like Use but doesn't quit the program neither save the settings to ENV:

Hide A H

This hides the Birdie Prefs window (without exiting).

You can pop it up again if you press a user-defined HotKey (in the MUI Preferences program) double-click on the app-icon or Click the 'Show' button in Exchange.

Quit A Q

Exits Birdie Prefs without saving anything. If the current Birdie configuration is the result of a press on 'test', it will be ran again with the old settings.

THE PREFERENCES MENU

Reset to defaults A W

This resets all settings to their default values.

Last Saved A O

Use this to read the preferences from disk. It is useful if you pressed the 'Use' button and want to revert back to the saved settings.

Initial values A I

This is a bit like pressing the 'Cancel' button and starting Birdie Prefs again. If you did not change the Birdie prefs manually after having started the program, it will display the window like it was when you started Birdie Prefs.

1.6 Bugs

-- No bugs known --

Don't hesitate to send me a mail (maxime@intelcom.ch) if you found anything strange in Birdie Prefs.

Please also read the Usage chapter if you have some trouble.

1.7 mui

This application uses

MUI - MagicUserInterface

(c) Copyright 1993-96 by Stefan Stuntz

MUI is a system to generate and maintain graphical user interfaces. With the aid of a preferences program, the user of an application has the ability to customize the outfit according to his personal taste.

MUI is distributed as shareware. To obtain a complete package containing lots of examples and more information about registration please look for a file called "muiXXusr.lha" (XX means the latest version number) on your local bulletin boards or on public domain disks.

If you want to register directly, feel free to send

DM 30.- or US$ 20.-

to

Stefan Stuntz

Eduard-Spranger-Straße 7

80935 München

GERMANY

Support and online registration is available at

http://www.sasg.com/

1.8   The Story of the Birth of Birdie Prefs

Histroy of Birdie Prefs

V0.0 -> 0.7 : Private releases, the programs were not yet useable.

V0.8: First Public release (08/01/98)

Lots of things are lacking in this version, like multiple patterns.

* It does save to the User-Startup or Startup-Sequence when the 'Save'

button is pressed.

V0.9: Second public release (09/01/98)

* Menus added; ActiveColor switch is now supported.

* Corrected some mistake in this guide.

* Changed the interface a bit.

* A digit of the sliders (balance settings) was deleted when reading

prefs: -126 became -12. Fixed.

V1.0ß: Third public release (11/01/98)

* Multiple patterns are now supported

* Changed the interface to a more compact one.

* Corrected some mistakes in this guide

* Birdie Prefs saves now the text that was before the Birdie command:

if you have put 'run c:birdie (...)' in your user-startup, Birdie Prefs

now writes also 'run c:birdie (...)' when the 'Save' button is pressed

and not the default 'run >NIL: <NIL: birdie (...)'.

V1.01: Fourth public release (24/01/98)

* Again corrected some mistakes in this guide (I didn't know I was able to put so much in such a small guide ;-)

* Version 1.5 of Birdie supported (Exclude switch added)

* XMas version isn't supported anymore. I will maybe put a 'XMAS=(TRUE|FALSE)' tooltype so that if there is another Birdie XMas edition (Xmas 98 ?), the user will be able to activate this tooltype even with an older version of Birdie Prefs.

V1.02: Small bug fix (31/01/98)

* A buffer for saving e.g. filenames was too short and a part of a string risked to be lost.

(Thanks to Federico Pomi)

V1.11: Fifth public release, lots of changes this time (29/04/98)

* There is now a preferences file (Env:Birdie.Prefs), so Birdie Prefs load a lot faster.

* The Birdie Prefs executable is now 7K smaller :-) [but still 22K, bigger than Birdie itself :-(]

* All known bugs removed

* Since Birdie Prefs doesn't read the startup-scripts, the user is no more forced to use dirs without spaces or other annoying things.

* There was still limits, some string buffers were allocated with one or two hundreds chars, causing some problems if the command line was too long.

I now fixed that limit to six hundred, I hope it will now be sufficient

* The code is a little smaller and I removed some useless variables. The message area (bottom) can now have more possible messages, so if something is slow, the user will see what is slow

* There could be some crashes if Birdie did not quit fast enough when it was broken. Birdie Prefs now silently waits.

V1.12: Little bug fix (30/04/98)

* If Birdie was started, from the startup-sequence, with a directory name, its process could not be detected by Birdie Prefs.

V1.20 and V1.25: Sixth public release (15/05/98)

* Birdie Prefs is now localised! French and English languages available.

* Some small changes to the code.

* Context menus to reset a single gadget to the default settings or the initial values.

1.26 Minor update (21/05/98)

* Put some more strings in the catalogs, that were in English before.

* The precision slider now shows 'Exact' instead of -1.

* I remarked a silly bug: Birdie Prefs wrote 'NoLightning' instead of 'nolighting'.. This switch now works.

* Same for 'FloodMaskMwb' versus 'FloodMaskWb'..

1.27 Seventh public release (13/06/98)

* Breaking/restarting Birdie is a lot faster and safer now. I've tried to execute some commands while Birdie was loading, no crashes occurred, though it was a bit slowed down :-)

1.9   The author of Birdie Prefs

My address is:

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Important note:

I wrote only the preference interface for Birdie!

The one who wrote Birdie itself is Trond Werner Hansen,

his Email is: tronhan@stud.ntnu.no

So if you have compatibility problems, found a bug with Birdie or anything else concerning the hack write to him.

If arguments are badly read, the interface does crash or behave strangely, if you see Enforcer hits while using the interface, write to me.

My other programs on Aminet are:

Convertor (misc/math/Convertor.lha): A powerful, useful, fast (and so on) unit Converter

Circuit (misc/sci/logic_c.lha)

A freeware and fast logic circuit simulator, you can link switches with doors (NAND,XOR...) and output with lights.

You can also turn a whole circuit into a single object.

Soon to come (Expect it before the end of that year ;-): PicFX, a program that creates/deforms pictures using math formulas.

1.10   Source & catalogs

LOCALISATION

Included in the 'Source' drawer are, with the source, the catalog description and all catalog translations.

If you want to translate Birdie Prefs in a new language, create a new <language>.ct (or directely translate the catalog with e.g. catEdit) and send your work to me.

You will have your name in this guide :-) your translation will be added to the archive and sent to Aminet.

If you changed a .ct file or created a new one, You can do the following to compile it, with FlexCat. (Note that you aren't required to do it yourself, just sending me the .ct file is enough, in this case I would send you the catalog)

FlexCat bprefs.cd français.ct CATALOG locale:catalogs/<language>/bprefs.catalog

If you create a new translation, send it to me!

SOURCE

If you want to recompile the source, you must use FlexCat to have the 'bprefslocale.m' module, like this:

Flexcat bprefs.cd bprefslocale.e=E30b.sd

ec bprefslocale.e

If there is something you don't understand, or if you have trouble to get it work, tell me about it.

1.11   Acknowledgements

Thanks go to:

Trond Werner Hansen of course - He wrote Birdie, no more sad and boring blue/grey windows!

Wouter van Oortmerssen - AmigaE: Allowed me to make easily high speed programs on Amiga

Stefan Stuntz - Developed Magic User Interface, that makes Birdie Prefs so friendly and nice

Urban Müller - Built the home of all public domain programs: Aminet

Daniel Laffien- Gave me the idea of putting a preference file for faster loading and possibility to have more settings

Frederico Pomi - Told me about a bug that made Birdie Prefs happen strangely on some cases

I have probably forgotten some other people, please forgive me.