
objgraph Documentation

Release 3.0.1

Marius Gedminas

September 17, 2016

1	Installation and Documentation	3
2	Quick start	5
3	Backreferences	7
4	Memory leak example	9
5	Reference counting bugs	11
6	API Documentation	13
6.1	objgraph	13
7	More examples, that also double as tests	19
7.1	Too many references	19
7.2	Reference counts	19
7.3	Extra information	20
7.4	Highlighting	20
7.5	Uncollectable garbage	23
7.6	Stack frames and generators	23
7.7	Graph searches	28
7.8	Quoting unsafe characters	28
8	History	31
8.1	Changes	31
9	Support and Development	35
9.1	Hacking on objgraph	35
	Python Module Index	39

objgraph is a module that lets you visually explore Python object graphs.

You'll need [graphviz](#) if you want to draw the pretty graphs.

I recommend [xdot](#) for interactive use. `pip install xdot` should suffice; objgraph will automatically look for it in your `PATH`.

Installation and Documentation

`pip install objgraph` or download it from PyPI.

Documentation lives at <http://mg.pov.lt/objgraph>.

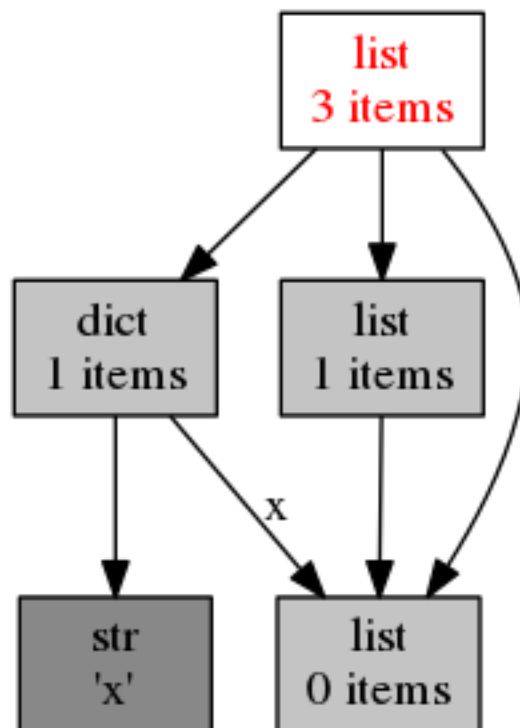
Quick start

Try this in a Python shell:

```
>>> x = []
>>> y = [x, [x], dict(x=x)]
>>> import objgraph
>>> objgraph.show_refs([y], filename='sample-graph.png')
Graph written to ....dot (... nodes)
Image generated as sample-graph.png
```

(If you've installed `xdot`, omit the `filename` argument to get the interactive viewer.)

You should see a graph like this:



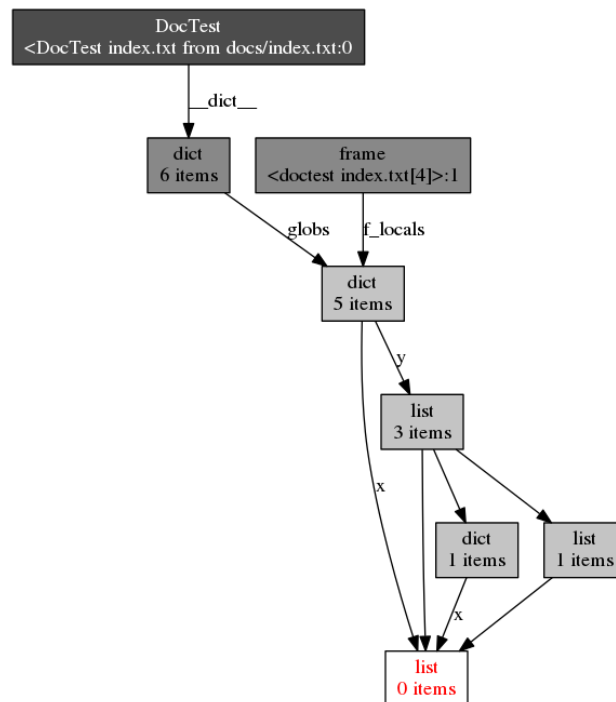
If you prefer to handle your own file output, you can provide a file object to the `output` parameter of `show_refs` and `show_backrefs` instead of a filename. The contents of this file will contain the graph source in DOT format.

Backreferences

Now try

```
>>> objgraph.show_backrefs([x], filename='sample-backref-graph.png')
...
Graph written to ....dot (8 nodes)
Image generated as sample-backref-graph.png
```

and you'll see



Memory leak example

The original purpose of *objgraph* was to help me find memory leaks. The idea was to pick an object in memory that shouldn't be there and then see what references are keeping it alive.

To get a quick overview of the objects in memory, use the imaginatively-named `show_most_common_types()`:

```
>>> objgraph.show_most_common_types()
tuple                5224
function             1329
wrapper_descriptor   967
dict                 790
builtin_function_or_method 658
method_descriptor    340
weakref              322
list                 168
member_descriptor    167
type                 163
```

But that's looking for a small needle in a large haystack. Can we limit our haystack to objects that were created recently? Perhaps.

Let's define a function that "leaks" memory

```
>>> class MyBigFatObject(object):
...     pass
...
>>> def compute_something(_cache={}):
...     _cache[42] = dict(foo=MyBigFatObject(),
...                       bar=MyBigFatObject())
...     # a very explicit and easy-to-find "leak" but oh well
...     x = MyBigFatObject() # this one doesn't leak
```

We take a snapshot of all the objects counts that are alive before we call our function

```
>>> objgraph.show_growth(limit=3)
tuple                5228      +5228
function             1330      +1330
wrapper_descriptor    967       +967
```

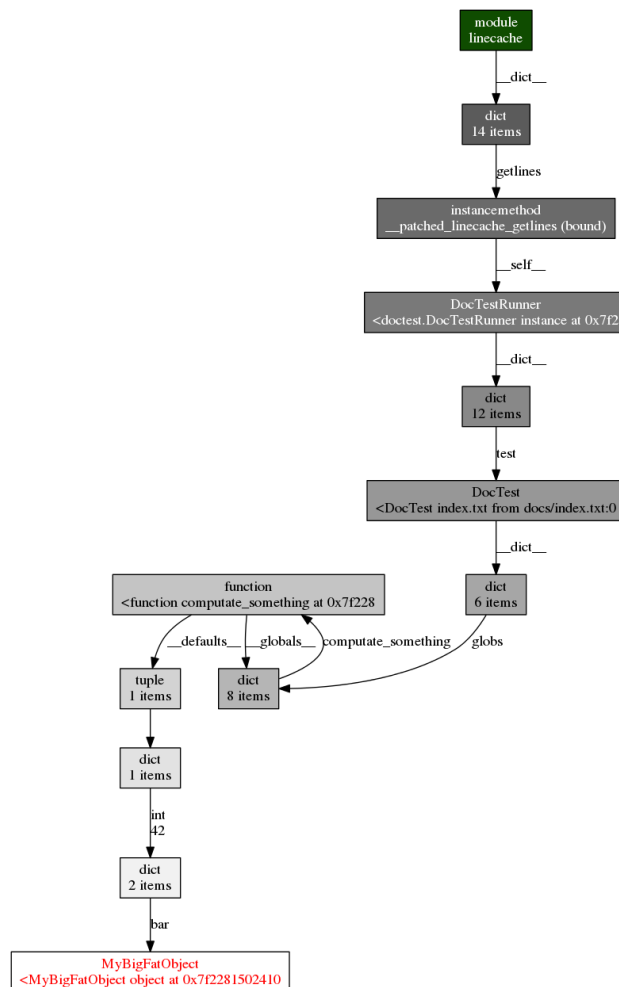
and see what changes after we call it

```
>>> compute_something()
>>> objgraph.show_growth()
MyBigFatObject        2         +2
dict                  797        +1
```

It's easy to see `MyBigFatObject` instances that appeared and were not freed. I can pick one of them at random and trace the reference chain back to one of the garbage collector's roots.

For simplicity's sake let's assume all of the roots are modules. `objgraph` provides a function, `is_proper_module()`, to check this. If you've any examples where that isn't true, I'd love to hear about them (although see [Reference counting bugs](#)).

```
>>> import random
>>> objgraph.show_chain(
...     objgraph.find_backref_chain(
...         random.choice(objgraph.by_type('MyBigFatObject')),
...         objgraph.is_proper_module),
...     filename='chain.png')
Graph written to ...dot (13 nodes)
Image generated as chain.png
```



It is perhaps surprising to find `linecache` at the end of that chain (apparently `doctest` monkey-patches it), but the important things – `compute_something()` and its cache dictionary – are in there.

There are other tools, perhaps better suited for memory leak hunting: [heapy](#), [Dozer](#).

Reference counting bugs

Bugs in C-level reference counting may leave objects in memory that do not have any other objects pointing at them. You can find these by calling `get_leaking_objects()`, but you'll have to filter out legitimate GC roots from them, and there are a *lot* of those:

```
>>> roots = objgraph.get_leaking_objects()
>>> len(roots)
4621
```

```
>>> objgraph.show_most_common_types(objects=roots)
...
tuple          4333
dict           171
list           74
instancemethod 4
listiterator   2
MemoryError    1
Sub            1
RuntimeError   1
Param          1
Add            1
```

```
>>> objgraph.show_refs(roots[:3], refcounts=True, filename='roots.png')
...
Graph written to ...dot (19 nodes)
Image generated as roots.png
```



API Documentation

6.1 objgraph

Tools for drawing Python object reference graphs with graphviz.

You can find documentation online at <http://mg.pov.lt/objgraph/>

Copyright (c) 2008-2016 Marius Gedminas <marius@pov.lt> and contributors

Released under the MIT licence.

6.1.1 Statistics

`objgraph.count` (*typename* [, *objects*])

Count objects tracked by the garbage collector with a given class name.

The class name can optionally be fully qualified.

Example:

```
>>> count('dict')
42
>>> count('mymodule.MyClass')
2
```

Note: The Python garbage collector does not track simple objects like `int` or `str`. See https://docs.python.org/3/library/gc.html#gc.is_tracked for more information.

Instead of looking through all objects tracked by the GC, you may specify your own collection, e.g.

```
>>> count('MyClass', get_leaking_objects())
3
```

See also: `get_leaking_objects()`.

Changed in version 1.7: New parameter: `objects`.

Changed in version 1.8: Accepts fully-qualified type names (i.e. `'package.module.ClassName'`) as well as short type names (i.e. `'ClassName'`).

`objgraph.typestats` ([*objects*, *shortnames=True*])

Count the number of instances for each type tracked by the GC.

Note that the GC does not track simple objects like `int` or `str`.

Note that classes with the same name but defined in different modules will be lumped together if `shortnames` is `True`.

Example:

```
>>> tpestats()
{'list': 12041, 'tuple': 10245, ...}
>>> tpestats(get_leaking_objects())
{'MemoryError': 1, 'tuple': 2795, 'RuntimeError': 1, 'list': 47, ...}
```

New in version 1.1.

Changed in version 1.7: New parameter: `objects`.

Changed in version 1.8: New parameter: `shortnames`.

`objgraph.most_common_types` (`[limit=10, objects, shortnames=True]`)

Count the names of types with the most instances.

Returns a list of (type_name, count), sorted most-frequent-first.

Limits the return value to at most `limit` items. You may set `limit` to `None` to avoid that.

The caveats documented in `tpestats()` apply.

Example:

```
>>> most_common_types(limit=2)
[('list', 12041), ('tuple', 10245)]
```

New in version 1.4.

Changed in version 1.7: New parameter: `objects`.

Changed in version 1.8: New parameter: `shortnames`.

`objgraph.show_most_common_types` (`[limit=10, objects, shortnames=True, file=sys.stdout]`)

Print the table of types of most common instances.

The caveats documented in `tpestats()` apply.

Example:

```
>>> show_most_common_types(limit=5)
tuple                8959
function             2442
wrapper_descriptor   1048
dict                 953
builtin_function_or_method 800
```

New in version 1.1.

Changed in version 1.7: New parameter: `objects`.

Changed in version 1.8: New parameter: `shortnames`.

Changed in version 3.0: New parameter: `file`.

`objgraph.show_growth` (`[limit=10, peak_stats={}, shortnames=True, file=sys.stdout]`)

Show the increase in peak object counts since last call.

Limits the output to `limit` largest deltas. You may set `limit` to `None` to see all of them.

Uses and updates `peak_stats`, a dictionary from type names to previously seen peak object counts. Usually you don't need to pay attention to this argument.

The caveats documented in `typestats()` apply.

Example:

```
>>> show_growth()
wrapper_descriptor      970      +14
tuple                  12282     +10
dict                    1922      +7
...
```

New in version 1.5.

Changed in version 1.8: New parameter: `shortnames`.

Changed in version 2.1: New parameter: `file`.

6.1.2 Locating and Filtering Objects

`objgraph.get_leaking_objects([objects])`

Return objects that do not have any referents.

These could indicate reference-counting bugs in C code. Or they could be legitimate.

Note that the GC does not track simple objects like `int` or `str`.

New in version 1.7.

`objgraph.by_type(typename[, objects])`

Return objects tracked by the garbage collector with a given class name.

Example:

```
>>> by_type('MyClass')
[<mymodule.MyClass object at 0x...>]
```

Note that the GC does not track simple objects like `int` or `str`.

Changed in version 1.7: New parameter: `objects`.

Changed in version 1.8: Accepts fully-qualified type names (i.e. `'package.module.ClassName'`) as well as short type names (i.e. `'ClassName'`).

`objgraph.at(addr)`

Return an object at a given memory address.

The reverse of `id(obj)`:

```
>>> at(id(obj)) is obj
True
```

Note that this function does not work on objects that are not tracked by the GC (e.g. ints or strings).

`objgraph.is_proper_module(obj)`

Returns `True` if `obj` can be treated like a garbage collector root.

That is, if `obj` is a module that is in `sys.modules`.

```
>>> import types
>>> is_proper_module([])
False
>>> is_proper_module(types)
True
```

```
>>> is_proper_module(types.ModuleType('foo'))
False
```

New in version 1.8.

6.1.3 Traversing and Displaying Object Graphs

`objgraph.find_ref_chain(obj, predicate[, max_depth=20, extra_ignore=()])`

Find a shortest chain of references leading from `obj`.

The end of the chain will be some object that matches your predicate.

`predicate` is a function taking one argument and returning a boolean.

`max_depth` limits the search depth.

`extra_ignore` can be a list of object IDs to exclude those objects from your search.

Example:

```
>>> find_ref_chain(obj, lambda x: isinstance(x, MyClass))
[obj, ..., <MyClass object at ...>]
```

Returns `[obj]` if such a chain could not be found.

New in version 1.7.

`objgraph.find_backref_chain(obj, predicate[, max_depth=20, extra_ignore=()])`

Find a shortest chain of references leading to `obj`.

The start of the chain will be some object that matches your predicate.

`predicate` is a function taking one argument and returning a boolean.

`max_depth` limits the search depth.

`extra_ignore` can be a list of object IDs to exclude those objects from your search.

Example:

```
>>> find_backref_chain(obj, is_proper_module)
[<module ...>, ..., obj]
```

Returns `[obj]` if such a chain could not be found.

Changed in version 1.5: Returns `obj` instead of `None` when a chain could not be found.

`objgraph.show_chain(chain[, ..., highlight=None, filename=None, extra_info=None, refcounts=False, shortnames=True])`

Show a chain (or several chains) of object references.

Useful in combination with `find_ref_chain()` or `find_backref_chain()`, e.g.

```
>>> show_chain(find_backref_chain(obj, is_proper_module))
```

You can specify if you want that chain traced backwards or forwards by passing a `backrefs` keyword argument, e.g.

```
>>> show_chain(find_ref_chain(obj, is_proper_module),
...             backrefs=False)
```

Ideally this shouldn't matter, but for some objects `gc.get_referrers()` and `gc.get_referents()` are not perfectly symmetrical.

You can specify `highlight`, `extra_info`, `refcounts`, `shortnames`, `filename` or `output` arguments like for `show_backrefs()` or `show_refs()`.

New in version 1.5.

Changed in version 1.7: New parameter: `backrefs`.

Changed in version 2.0: New parameter: `output`.

```
objgraph.show_backrefs(objs[, max_depth=3, extra_ignore=(), filter=None, too_many=10, highlight=None, filename=None, extra_info=None, refcounts=False, shortnames=True])
```

Generate an object reference graph ending at `objs`.

The graph will show you what objects refer to `objs`, directly and indirectly.

`objs` can be a single object, or it can be a list of objects. If unsure, wrap the single object in a new list.

`filename` if specified, can be the name of a `.dot` or a image file, whose extension indicates the desired output format; note that output to a specific format is entirely handled by GraphViz: if the desired format is not supported, you just get the `.dot` file. If `filename` and `output` is not specified, `show_backrefs` will try to produce a `.dot` file and spawn a viewer (`xdot`). If `xdot` is not available, `show_backrefs` will convert the `.dot` file to a `.png` and print its name.

`output` if specified, the GraphViz output will be written to this file object. `output` and `filename` should not both be specified.

Use `max_depth` and `too_many` to limit the depth and breadth of the graph.

Use `filter` (a predicate) and `extra_ignore` (a list of object IDs) to remove undesired objects from the graph.

Use `highlight` (a predicate) to highlight certain graph nodes in blue.

Use `extra_info` (a function taking one argument and returning a string) to report extra information for objects.

Specify `refcounts=True` if you want to see reference counts. These will mostly match the number of arrows pointing to an object, but can be different for various reasons.

Specify `shortnames=False` if you want to see fully-qualified type names ('package.module.ClassName'). By default you get to see only the class name part.

Examples:

```
>>> show_backrefs(obj)
>>> show_backrefs([obj1, obj2])
>>> show_backrefs(obj, max_depth=5)
>>> show_backrefs(obj, filter=lambda x: not inspect.isclass(x))
>>> show_backrefs(obj, highlight=inspect.isclass)
>>> show_backrefs(obj, extra_ignore=[id(locals())])
```

Changed in version 1.3: New parameters: `filename`, `extra_info`.

Changed in version 1.5: New parameter: `refcounts`.

Changed in version 1.8: New parameter: `shortnames`.

Changed in version 2.0: New parameter: `output`.

```
objgraph.show_refs(objs[, max_depth=3, extra_ignore=(), filter=None, too_many=10, highlight=None, filename=None, extra_info=None, refcounts=False, shortnames=True])
```

Generate an object reference graph starting at `objs`.

The graph will show you what objects are reachable from `objs`, directly and indirectly.

`objs` can be a single object, or it can be a list of objects. If unsure, wrap the single object in a new list.

`filename` if specified, can be the name of a `.dot` or a image file, whose extension indicates the desired output format; note that output to a specific format is entirely handled by GraphViz: if the desired format is not supported, you just get the `.dot` file. If `filename` and `output` is not specified, `show_refs` will try to produce a `.dot` file and spawn a viewer (`xdot`). If `xdot` is not available, `show_refs` will convert the `.dot` file to a `.png` and print its name.

`output` if specified, the GraphViz output will be written to this file object. `output` and `filename` should not both be specified.

Use `max_depth` and `too_many` to limit the depth and breadth of the graph.

Use `filter` (a predicate) and `extra_ignore` (a list of object IDs) to remove undesired objects from the graph.

Use `highlight` (a predicate) to highlight certain graph nodes in blue.

Use `extra_info` (a function returning a string) to report extra information for objects.

Specify `refcounts=True` if you want to see reference counts.

Examples:

```
>>> show_refs(obj)
>>> show_refs([obj1, obj2])
>>> show_refs(obj, max_depth=5)
>>> show_refs(obj, filter=lambda x: not inspect.isclass(x))
>>> show_refs(obj, highlight=inspect.isclass)
>>> show_refs(obj, extra_ignore=[id(locals())])
```

New in version 1.1.

Changed in version 1.3: New parameters: `filename`, `extra_info`.

Changed in version 1.5: Follows references from module objects instead of stopping. New parameter: `refcounts`.

Changed in version 1.8: New parameter: `shortnames`.

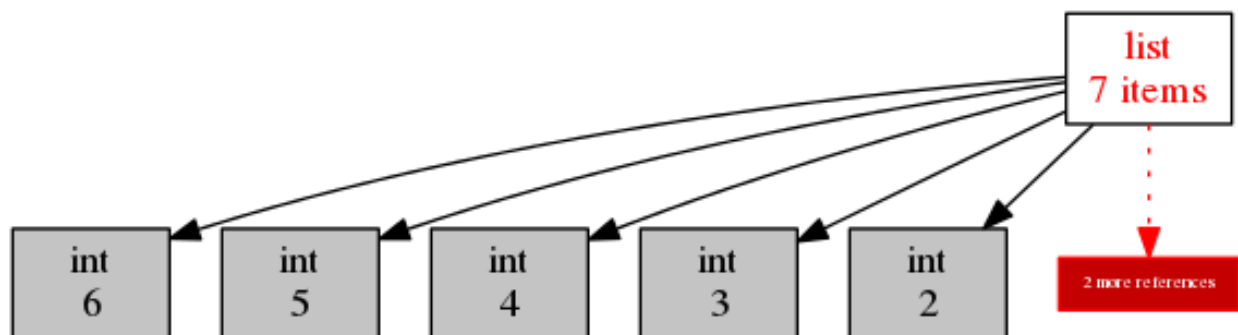
Changed in version 2.0: New parameter: `output`.

More examples, that also double as tests

7.1 Too many references

Objects that have too many references are truncated

```
>>> import objgraph
>>> objgraph.show_refs([list(range(7))], too_many=5, filename='too-many.png')
Graph written to ....dot (6 nodes)
Image generated as too-many.png
```



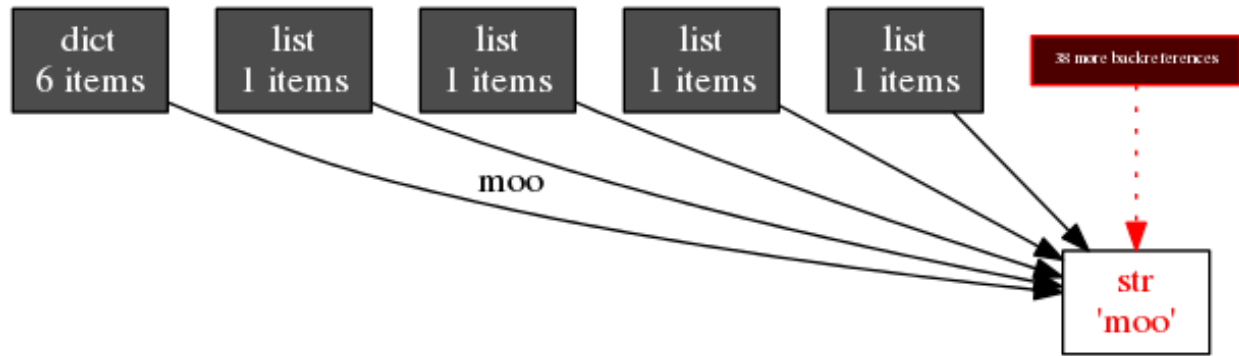
The same sort of thing applies to backreferences

```
>>> moo = 'moo'
>>> refs_to_moo = [[moo] for n in range(42)]
>>> objgraph.show_backrefs([moo], too_many=5, max_depth=1, filename='42.png')
Graph written to ....dot (6 nodes)
Image generated as 42.png
```

7.2 Reference counts

You can enable reference counts. The number of arrows pointing to an object should match the number in square brackets, usually, but there can be exceptions. E.g. objects internal to objgraph's implementation may inflate the reference count somewhat.

```
>>> import sys
>>> one_reference = object()
>>> objgraph.show_backrefs([one_reference], refcounts=True,
```



```
...     filename='refcounts.png')
Graph written to ....dot (5 nodes)
Image generated as refcounts.png
```

We see two references to the `one_reference` object: the one not shown comes from the list passed to `show_backrefs`.

I think the extra references to the frame object and locals dict come from the interpreter internals.

7.3 Extra information

You can add extra information to object graphs, if you desire. For example, let's add object IDs:

```
>>> x = []
>>> y = [x, [x], dict(x=x)]
>>> import objgraph
>>> objgraph.show_refs([y], extra_info=lambda x: hex(id(x)),
...                     filename='extra-info.png')
Graph written to ....dot (... nodes)
Image generated as extra-info.png
```

This way you can then look them up later with `at()`, if you desire to get a closer look at a particular object:

```
>>> objgraph.at(id(x)) is x
True
```

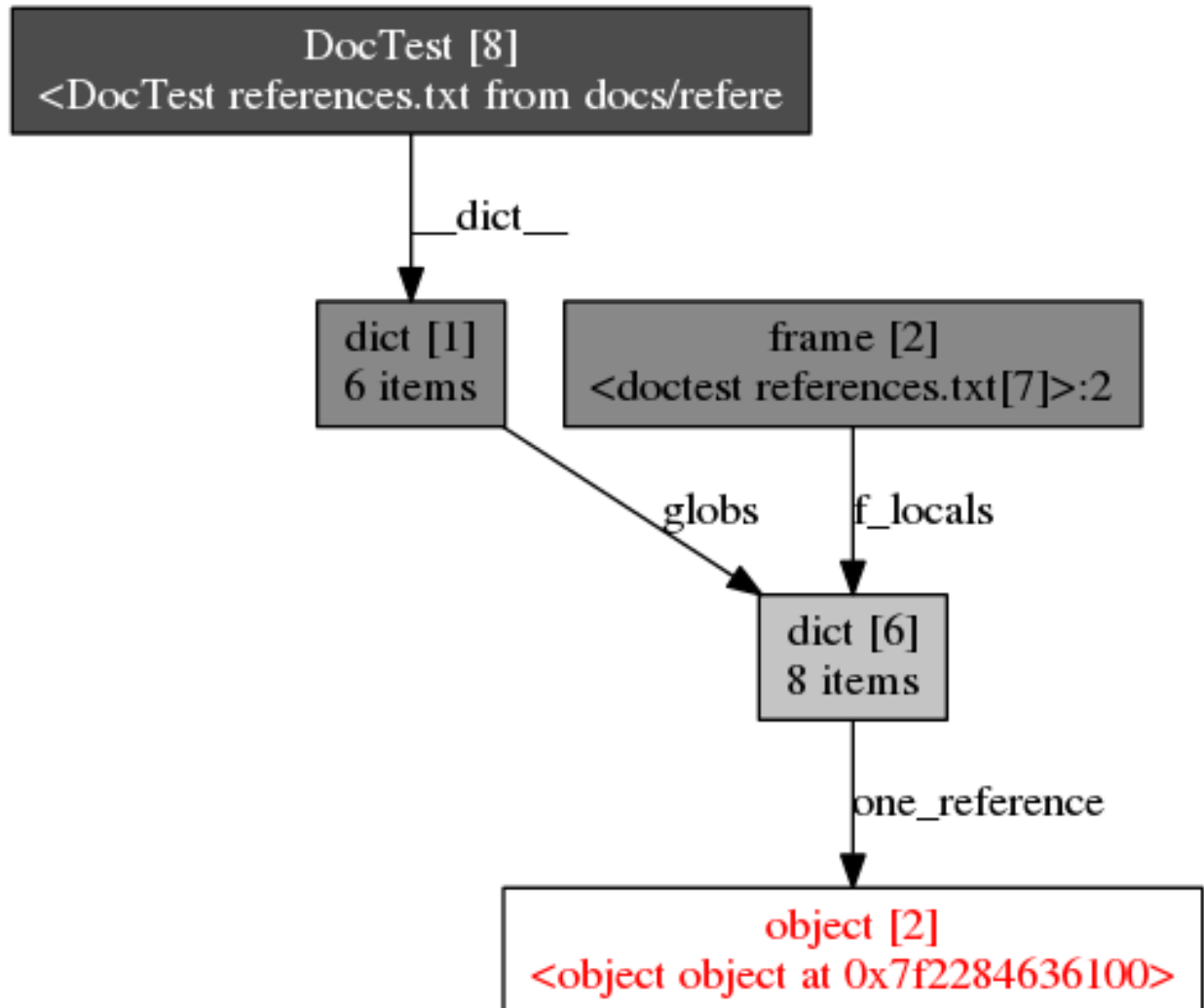
Warning: this doesn't work with strings or ints or other simple types that aren't tracked by the cyclic garbage collector:

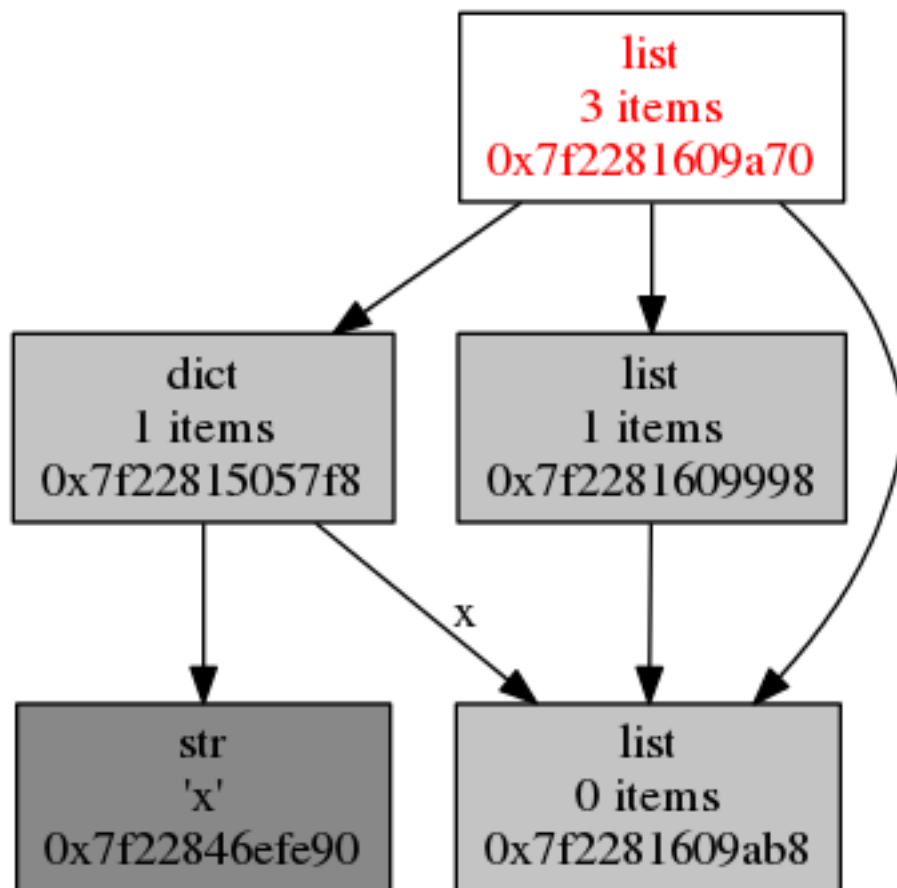
```
>>> a = 'a string'
>>> objgraph.at(id(a))
```

7.4 Highlighting

You can highlight some graph nodes.

```
>>> class Node(object):
...     def __init__(self, *neighbours):
...         self.neighbours = list(neighbours)
>>> a = Node()
>>> b = Node(a)
>>> c = Node(b)
```



```
>>> d = Node(c)
>>> a.neighbours.append(d)
```

```
>>> import objgraph
>>> objgraph.show_backrefs(a, max_depth=15,
...     extra_ignore=[id(locals())],
...     highlight=lambda x: isinstance(x, Node),
...     filename='highlight.png')
Graph written to ....dot (12 nodes)
Image generated as highlight.png
```

7.5 Uncollectable garbage

Objects that have a `__del__` method cannot be collected by the garbage collector if they participate in a cycle, prior to Python 3.4.

```
>>> class Nondestructible(list):
...     def __del__(self):
...         pass
```

```
>>> x = Nondestructible()
>>> y = []
>>> z = []
>>> x.append(y)
>>> y.append(z)
>>> z.append(x)
```

When you remove all other references to these, they end up in `gc.garbage`.

```
>>> import objgraph
>>> del x, y, z
>>> import gc
>>> _ = gc.collect()
>>> len(gc.garbage)
1
```

We highlight these objects by showing the existence of a `__del__`.

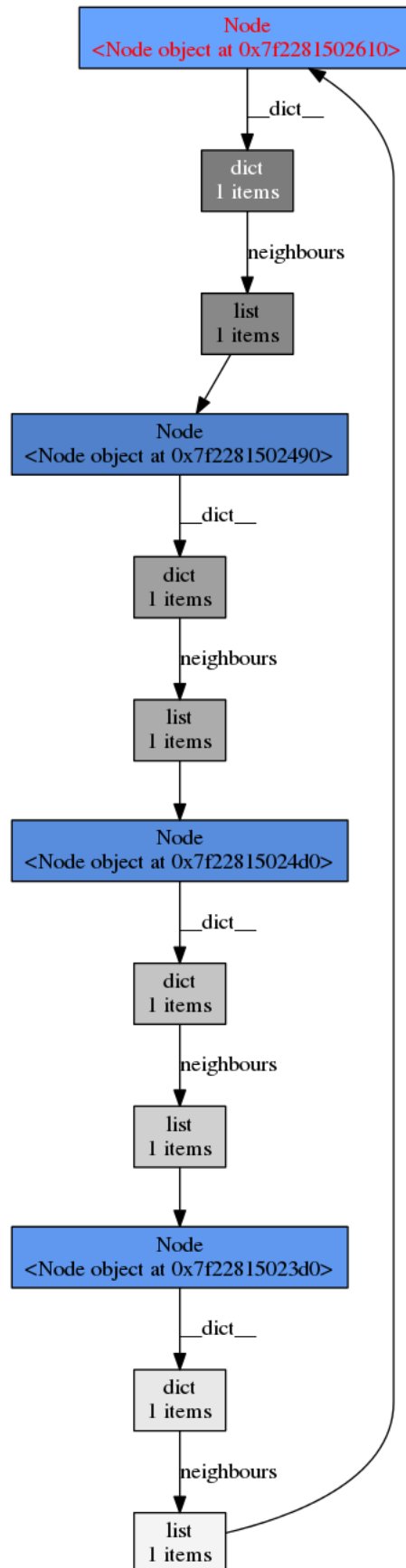
```
>>> objgraph.show_backrefs(objgraph.by_type('Nondestructible'),
...     filename='finalizers.png')
Graph written to ....dot (8 nodes)
Image generated as finalizers.png
```

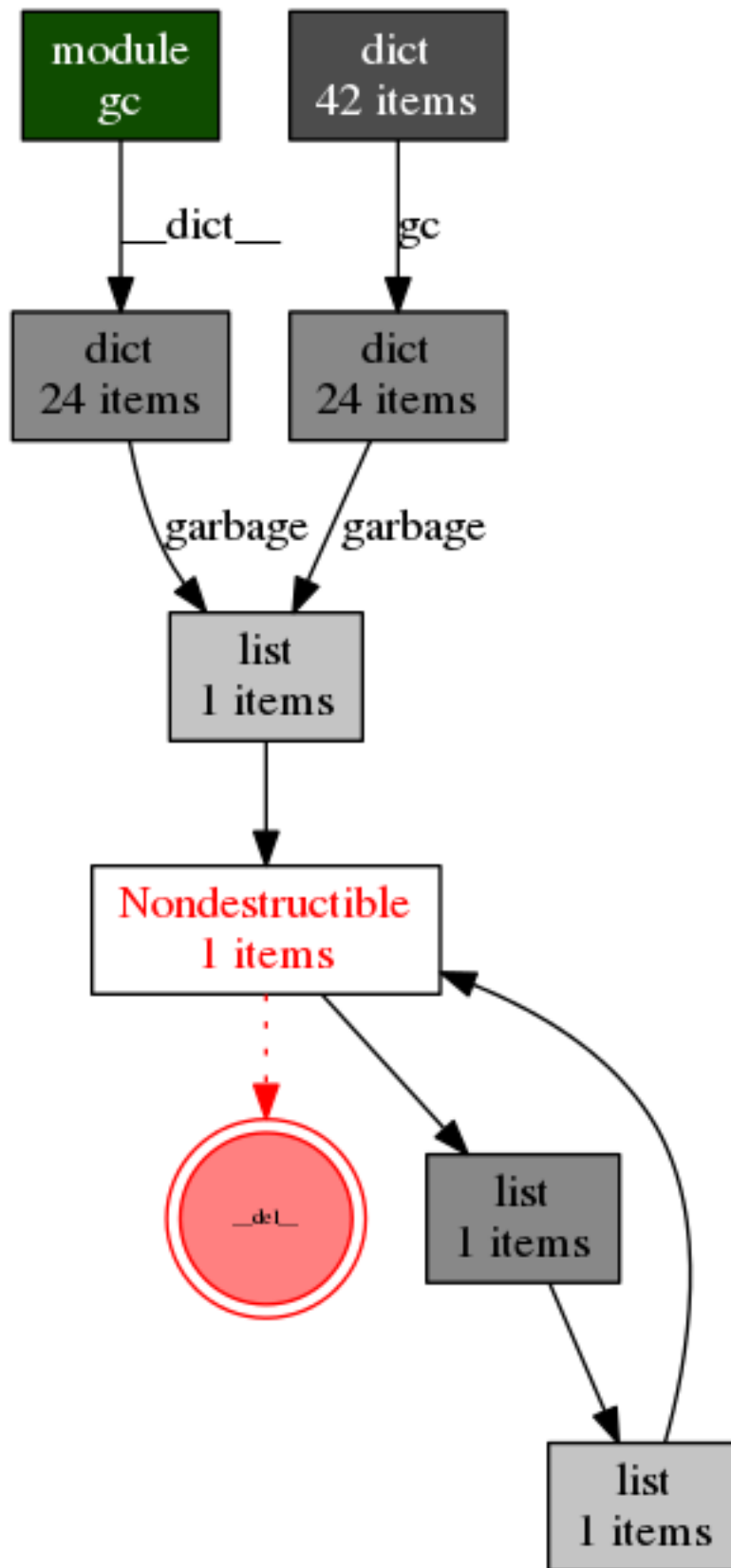
Note that classes that *define* a `__del__` method do not have this indicator

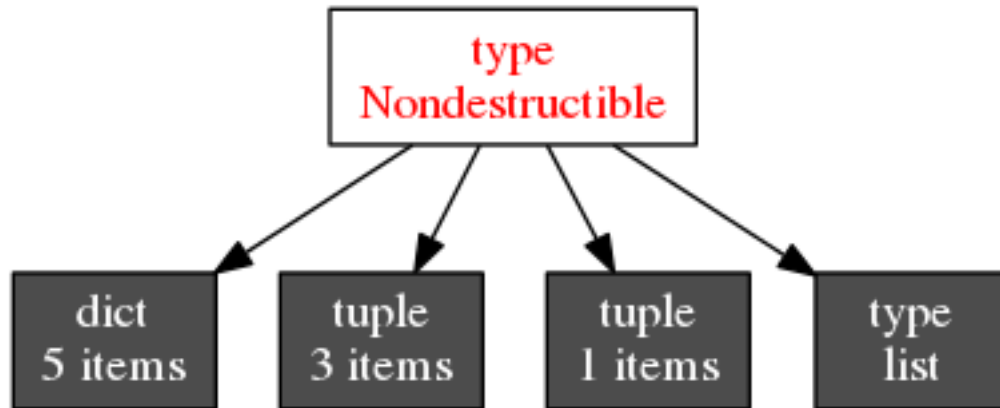
```
>>> objgraph.show_refs(Nondestructible, max_depth=1,
...     filename='class-with-finalizers.png')
Graph written to ....dot (5 nodes)
Image generated as class-with-finalizers.png
```

7.6 Stack frames and generators

Let's define a custom class







```
>>> class Canary(object):  
...     pass
```

Suppose we've a generator that uses it

```
>>> def count_to_three():  
...     tweety = Canary()  
...     yield 1  
...     yield 2  
...     yield 3
```

and we make it active

```
>>> it = count_to_three()  
>>> next(it)  
1
```

Now we can see that our Canary object is alive in memory

```
>>> import objgraph  
>>> objgraph.count('Canary')  
1
```

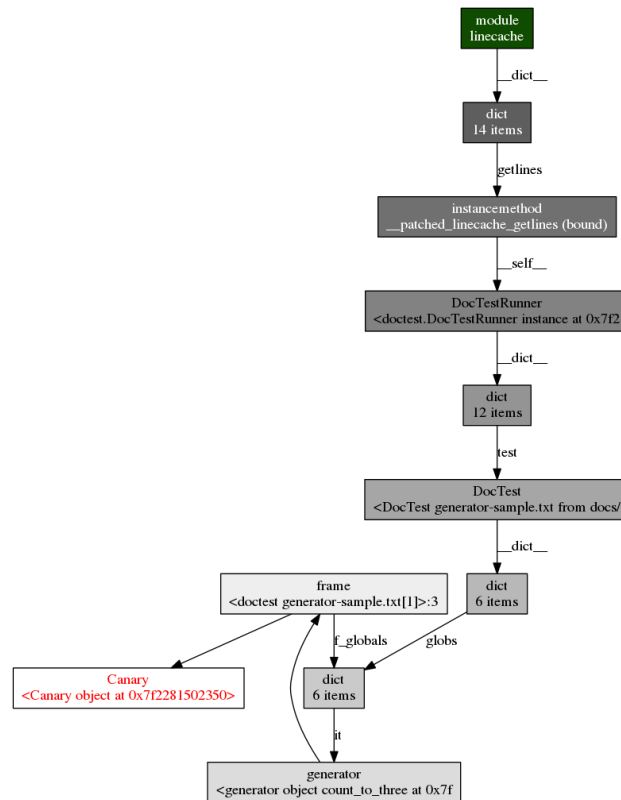
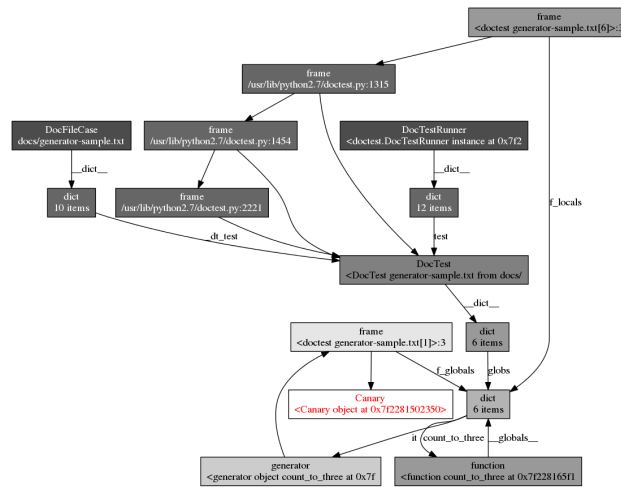
and we can see what holds it in memory

```
>>> objgraph.show_backrefs(objgraph.by_type('Canary'),  
...                       max_depth=7,  
...                       filename='canary.png')  
Graph written to ....dot (15 nodes)  
Image generated as canary.png
```

Or we can examine just one of the reference chains leading straight to a module.

```
>>> objgraph.show_chain(  
...     objgraph.find_backref_chain(objgraph.by_type('Canary')[0],  
...                               objgraph.is_proper_module),  
...     filename='canary-chain.png')  
Graph written to ....dot (11 nodes)  
Image generated as canary-chain.png
```

To a first approximation, modules are garbage-collection roots, which makes the latter technique most useful.



7.7 Graph searches

The other day I was wondering why pickling a particular object errored out with an error deep in one of the subobjects.

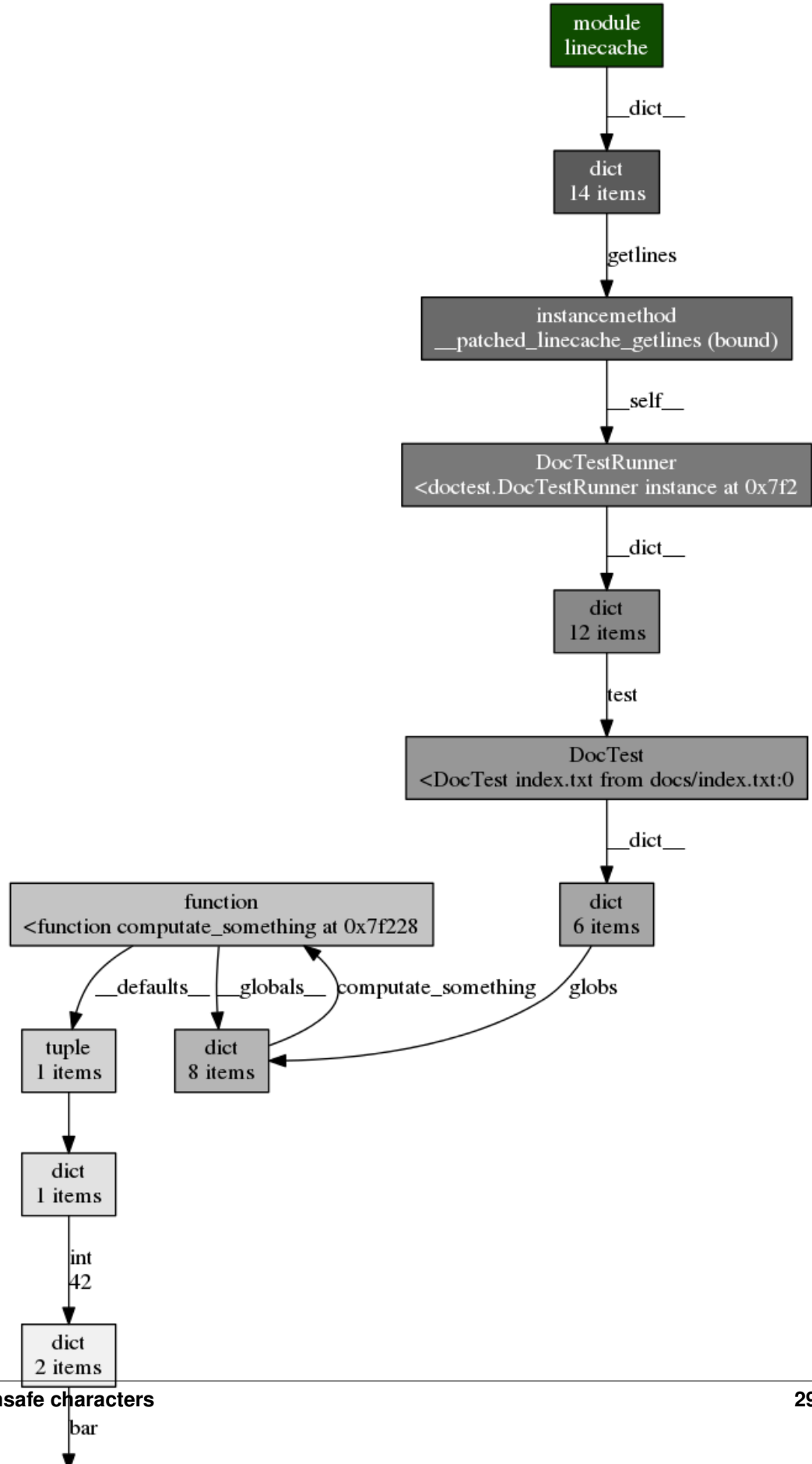
```
>>> class MyUnpicklableObject(object):
...     def __getstate__(self):
...         raise NotImplementedError
...
>>> my_object = dict(foo=dict(unrelated='things'),
...                   bar=[dict(nesting='fun'),
...                         dict(boobytrap=MyUnpicklableObject())])
>>> import objgraph
>>> objgraph.show_chain(
...     objgraph.find_ref_chain(
...         my_object,
...         lambda x: isinstance(x, MyUnpicklableObject)),
...     backrefs=False,
...     filename='forward-chain.png')
Graph written to ...dot (4 nodes)
Image generated as forward-chain.png
```

7.8 Quoting unsafe characters

Let's make sure our string quoting function can handle *anything*:

```
>>> import objgraph
>>> all_the_chars = dict((chr(i), i) for i in range(256))
>>> objgraph.show_refs(all_the_chars, too_many=600,
...                   filename='all-the-chars.dot')
Graph written to all-the-chars.dot (... nodes)
```

Trust me, you do not want to see the resulting image.



History

I’ve developed a set of functions that eventually became objgraph when I was hunting for memory leaks in a Python program. The whole story – with illustrated examples – is in this series of blog posts:

- [Hunting memory leaks in Python](#)
- [Python object graphs](#)
- [Object graphs with graphviz](#)

And here’s the change log

8.1 Changes

8.1.1 3.0.1 (2016-09-17)

- The `file` argument of `show_most_common_types()` and `show_growth()` now defaults to `None` instead of `sys.stdout`. `None` is interpreted to be the same as `sys.stdout`, which means the right `stdout` will be used if you change it at runtime (which happens, in doctests).

8.1.2 3.0.0 (2016-04-13)

- `show_most_common_types()` and `show_growth()` now accept a `file` argument if you want to redirect the output elsewhere.

Fixes [issue 24](#). Contributed by “d-sun-d”.

- Don’t trust `__class__` to be accurate and `__name__` to be a string. Fixes errors in some convoluted corner cases when mocks are involved.

Contributed by Andrew Shannon Brown in [PR 26](#).

- Drop support for Python 2.4, 2.5, and 2.6.
- Drop support for Python 3.1 and 3.2.
- Add support for Python 3.5.

8.1.3 2.0.1 (2015-07-28)

- Avoid creating reference cycles between the stack frame and the local `objects` variable in `by_type()`, `count()`, and `typstats()`.

Fixes [issue 22](#). Contributed by Erik Bray.

8.1.4 2.0.0 (2015-04-18)

- `show_refs()` and `show_backrefs()` now accept a file-like object (via the new `output` argument) as an alternative to a filename.
- Made internal helper methods private. This includes `find_chain()`, `show_graph()`, `obj_node_id()`, `obj_label()`, `quote()`, `long_typename()`, `safe_repr()`, `short_repr()`, `gradient()`, `edge_label()`, and `_program_in_path()`.
- Correctly determine the name of old-style classes in `count()`, `by_type()`, and graph drawing functions.

Fixes [issue 16](#). Contributed by Mike Lambert.

8.1.5 1.8.1 (2014-05-15)

- Do not expect file objects to have an `encoding` attribute. Makes objgraph compatible with Eventlet's monkey-patching.

Fixes [issue 6](#). Contributed by Jakub Stasiak.

8.1.6 1.8.0 (2014-02-13)

- Moved to GitHub.
- Python 3.4 support ([LP#1270872](#)).
- New function: `is_proper_module()`.
- New `shortnames` argument for `typstats()`, `most_common_types()`, `show_most_common_types()`, `show_growth()`, `show_refs()`, and `show_backrefs()`.
`count()` and `by_type()` accept fully-qualified type names now.

Fixes [issue 4](#).

8.1.7 1.7.2 (2012-10-23)

- Bugfix: `setup.py sdist` was broken on Python 2.7 (`UnicodeDecodeError` in `tarfile`).
- The `filename` argument for `show_refs()` and `show_backrefs()` now allows arbitrary image formats, not just PNG. Patch by [Riccardo Murri](#).
- Temporary dot files are now named `objgraph-*.dot` instead of `tmp*.dot`.
- Python 3.3 support: no code changes, but some tests started failing because the new and improved dictionary implementation no longer holds references to str objects used as dict keys.
- Added a `tox.ini` for convenient multi-Python testing.

8.1.8 1.7.1 (2011-12-11)

- Bugfix: non-ASCII characters in object representations would break graph generation on Python 3.x, in some locales (e.g. with LC_ALL=C). Reported and fixed by [Stefano Rivera](#).
- Bugfix: setup.py was broken on Python 3.x
- Bugfix: dot.exe/xdot.exe were not found on Windows (LP#767239).
- Documentation updates: document the forgotten `find_ref_chain()`, update `show_chain()` prototype.

8.1.9 1.7.0 (2011-03-11)

- New function: `find_ref_chain()`.
- New backrefs argument for `show_chain()`.
- New function: `get_leaking_objects()`, based on a [blog post](#) by Kristján Valur.
- New `objects` argument for `count()`, `typestats()`, `most_common_types()`, `show_most_common_types()`, and `by_type()`.
- Edges pointing to function attributes such as `__defaults__` or `__globals__` are now labeled.
- Edge labels that are not simple strings now show the type.
- Bugfix: '0' and other unsafe characters used in a dictionary key could break graph generation.
- Bugfix: `show_refs(..., filename='graph.dot')` would then go to complain about unrecognized file types and then produce a png.

8.1.10 1.6.0 (2010-12-18)

- Python 3 support, thanks to Stefano Rivera (fixes LP#687601).
- Removed weird weakref special-casing.

8.1.11 1.5.1 (2010-12-09)

- Avoid test failures in uncollectable-garbage.txt (fixes LP#686731).
- Added HACKING.txt (later renamed to HACKING.rst).

8.1.12 1.5.0 (2010-12-05)

- Show frame objects as well (fixes LP#361704).
- New functions: `show_growth()`, `show_chain()`.
- `find_backref_chain()` returns `[obj]` instead of `None` when a chain could not be found. This makes `show_chain(find_backref_chain(...), ...)` not break.
- Show how many references were skipped from the output of `show_refs()/show_backrefs()` by specifying `too_many`.
- Make `show_refs()` descend into modules.
- Do not highlight classes that define a `__del__`, highlight only instances of those classes.

- Option to show reference counts in `show_refs()`/`show_backrefs()`.
- Add [Sphinx](#) documentation and a PyPI long description.

8.1.13 1.4.0 (2010-11-03)

- Compatibility with Python 2.4 and 2.5 (`tempfile.NamedTemporaryFile` has no `delete` argument).
- New function: `most_common_types()`.

8.1.14 1.3.1 (2010-07-17)

- Rebuild an sdist with no missing files (fixes [LP#606604](#)).
- Added MANIFEST.in and a Makefile to check that setup.py sdist generates source distributions with no files missing.

8.1.15 1.3 (2010-07-13)

- Highlight objects with a `__del__` method.
- Fixes [LP#483411](#): suggest always passing `[obj]` to `show_refs()`, `show_backrefs()`, since `obj` might be a list/tuple.
- Fixes [LP#514422](#): `show_refs()`, `show_backrefs()` don't create files in the current working directory any more. Instead they accept a filename argument, which can be a `.dot` file or a `.png` file. If `None` or not specified, those functions will try to spawn `xdot` as before.
- New `extra_info` argument to graph-generating functions (patch by Thouis Jones, [LP#558914](#)).
- `setup.py` should work with distutils now ([LP#604430](#), thanks to Randy Heydon).

8.1.16 1.2 (2009-03-25)

- Project website, public source repository, uploaded to PyPI.
- No code changes.

8.1.17 1.1 (2008-09-10)

- New function: `show_refs()` for showing forward references.
- New functions: `typestats()` and `show_most_common_types()`.
- Object boxes are less crammed with useless information (such as IDs).
- Spawns `xdot` if it is available.

8.1.18 1.0 (2008-06-14)

- First public release.

Support and Development

The source code can be found in this Git repository: <https://github.com/mgedmin/objgraph>.

To check it out, use `git clone https://github.com/mgedmin/objgraph`.

Report bugs at <https://github.com/mgedmin/objgraph/issues>.

For more information, see *Hacking on objgraph*.

9.1 Hacking on objgraph

Start by getting the latest source with

```
git clone https://github.com/mgedmin/objgraph
```

Run the test suite with

```
make test
```

The test suite is mostly smoke tests (i.e. crashes will be noticed, subtly wrong output will be missed). I hope to improve that in the future, but don't hold your breath. Most of the testing is done manually or semi-automatically, e.g. by running `make images` and eyeballing the results (`imgdiff` is handy there).

9.1.1 Sending me patches

GitHub pull requests are probably the best way to send me patches. Or just email them to marius@gedmin.as.

I'd appreciate [issues in GitHub](#) for each proposed change, be it a bug or a feature request.

9.1.2 Supported Python versions

Python 2.4 through 2.7, as well as 3.x.

You can run the test suite for all supported Python versions with

```
make test-all-pythons
```

or with `detox` (which will be faster, since it runs the tests in parallel).

If a test fails, often the easiest way to debug is to compare the output visually

```
make images PYTHON=pythonX.Y
git config diff.imgdiff.command 'f() { imgdiff --eog -H $1 $2; }; f'
git diff docs/*.png
git checkout -- docs/*.png docs/*.dot
```

An easy way to get Pythons 2.4 through 2.7 (and 3.x) on Ubuntu is to use Felix Krull’s “[deadsnakes](#)” PPA:

```
sudo add-apt-repository ppa:fkrull/deadsnakes
sudo apt-get update
sudo apt-get install python2.{4,5,6,7} python3.{1,2,3}
```

9.1.3 Test coverage

As I mentioned, the tests are mostly smoke tests, and even then they’re incomplete. Install [coverage](#) to see how incomplete they are with

```
make coverage
```

I use a [vim plugin](#) to highlight lines not covered by tests while I edit

```
mkdir -p ~/.vim/plugin
cd ~/.vim/plugin
wget http://mg.pov.lt/vim/plugin/py-coverage-highlight.vim
cd ...
make coverage
vim objgraph.py
:HighlightCoverage
```

If you prefer HTML reports, run

```
make coverage
coverage html
```

and then browse `htmlcov/index.html`.

9.1.4 Documentation

To fully rebuild the documentation, run

```
make clean images docs
```

Please `git checkout --` the png files that haven’t changed significantly. (Many of the images include things like memory addresses which tend to change from run to run.)

[imgdiff](#) is useful for comparing the images with their older versions:

```
git config diff.imgdiff.command 'f() { imgdiff $1 $2; }; f'
git diff docs/*.png
```

It has a few options that may make the changes easier to see. I personally like:

```
git config diff.imgdiff.command 'f() { imgdiff --eog -H $1 $2; }; f'
git diff docs/*.png
```

When you add a new doctest file, remember to include it in `docs/index.txt`.

When you add a new function, make sure it has a [PEP-257](#)-compliant docstring and add the appropriate autodoc directive to `objgraph.txt`.

I insist on one departure from PEP-257: the closing `"""` should *not* be preceded by a blank line. Example:

```
def do_something():
    """Do something.

    Return something valuable.
    """
```

If Emacs is broken, fix emacs, do not make my docstrings ugly.

On the other hand, if the last thing in a docstring is an indented block quote or a doctest section, it should be surrounded by blank lines. Like this:

```
def do_something():
    """Do something.

    Return something valuable.

    Example:

        >>> do_something()
        42

    """
```

I find `restview` very handy for documentation writing: it lets me see how the text looks by pressing Ctrl-R in a browser window, without having to re-run any documentation building commands. The downside is that `restview` doesn't support Sphinx extensions to ReStructuredText, so you end up with error messages all over the place. Then again this is useful for bits that *can't* use Sphinx extensions, like the PyPI long description.

To preview the PyPI long description (which is generated by concatenating `README.rst` and `CHANGES.rst`) with `restview`, use this handy command:

```
make preview-pypi-description
```

because typing

```
restview -e "python setup.py --long-description"
```

is tedious, and bash has tab-completion for makefile rules.

9.1.5 Making releases

You need write access to the PyPI package and to the Git branch on GitHub. At the moment of this writing, this means you must be me.

Run `make release` and follow the instructions. It is safe to run this command at any time: it never commits/pushes/uploads to PyPI, it just tells you what to do.

9.1.6 Avoiding incomplete releases

It is important to keep `MANIFEST.in` up to date so that source tarballs generated with `python setup.py sdist` aren't missing any files, even if you don't have the right `setuptools` version control plugins installed. You can run

```
make distcheck
```

to be sure this is so, but it's not necessary – `make release` will do this every time.

(I've later written a standalone tool, `check-manifest` that can do this check for every Python package.)

O

objgraph, [13](#)

A

`at()` (in module `objgraph`), [15](#)

B

`by_type()` (in module `objgraph`), [15](#)

C

`count()` (in module `objgraph`), [13](#)

F

`find_backref_chain()` (in module `objgraph`), [16](#)

`find_ref_chain()` (in module `objgraph`), [16](#)

G

`get_leaking_objects()` (in module `objgraph`), [15](#)

I

`is_proper_module()` (in module `objgraph`), [15](#)

M

`most_common_types()` (in module `objgraph`), [14](#)

O

`objgraph` (module), [13](#)

S

`show_backrefs()` (in module `objgraph`), [17](#)

`show_chain()` (in module `objgraph`), [16](#)

`show_growth()` (in module `objgraph`), [14](#)

`show_most_common_types()` (in module `objgraph`), [14](#)

`show_refs()` (in module `objgraph`), [17](#)

T

`typestats()` (in module `objgraph`), [13](#)