

Package ‘luajr’

July 22, 2025

Type Package

Title 'LuaJIT' Scripting

Version 0.1.9

Description An interface to 'LuaJIT' <<https://luajit.org>>, a just-in-time compiler for the 'Lua' scripting language <<https://www.lua.org>>. Allows users to run 'Lua' code from 'R'.

URL <https://github.com/nicholasdavies/luajr>,
<https://nicholasdavies.github.io/luajr/>

BugReports <https://github.com/nicholasdavies/luajr/issues>

License MIT + file LICENSE

Encoding UTF-8

SystemRequirements GNU make

Suggests Rcpp, crayon, knitr, rmarkdown, testthat (>= 3.0.0)

RoxygenNote 7.3.2

VignetteBuilder knitr

Config/testthat/edition 3

NeedsCompilation yes

Author Mike Pall [aut, cph] (Author of the embedded LuaJIT compiler),
Lua.org, PUC-Rio [cph] (Copyright holders over portions of Lua source
code included in LuaJIT),
Nicholas Davies [cre, ctb, cph] (Author of the R package wrapper,
ORCID: <<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1740-1412>>),
Scott Lembcke, Howling Moon Software [ctb, cph] (Authors of the
embedded debugger.lua debugger)

Maintainer Nicholas Davies <nicholas.davies@lshtm.ac.uk>

Repository CRAN

Date/Publication 2025-04-30 11:50:02 UTC

Contents

luajr-package	2
lua	3
lua_func	4
lua_mode	5
lua_open	8
lua_parallel	9
lua_profile	10
lua_reset	11
lua_shell	12
Index	13

luajr-package	<i>luajr: LuaJIT Scripting</i>
---------------	--------------------------------

Description

'luajr' provides an interface to **LuaJIT**, a just-in-time compiler for the **Lua scripting language**. It allows users to run Lua code from R.

The R API

- `lua()`: run Lua code
- `lua_func()`: make a Lua function callable from R
- `lua_shell()`: run an interactive Lua shell
- `lua_open()`: create a new Lua state
- `lua_reset()`: reset the default Lua state
- `lua_parallel()`: run Lua code in parallel

Further reading

For an introduction to 'luajr', see `vignette("luajr")`

Author(s)

Maintainer: Nicholas Davies <nicholas.davies@lshtm.ac.uk> (**ORCID**) (Author of the R package wrapper) [contributor, copyright holder]

Authors:

- Mike Pall (Author of the embedded LuaJIT compiler) [copyright holder]

Other contributors:

- Lua.org, PUC-Rio (Copyright holders over portions of Lua source code included in LuaJIT) [copyright holder]
- Scott Lembcke, Howling Moon Software (Authors of the embedded debugger.lua debugger) [contributor, copyright holder]

See Also

Useful links:

- <https://github.com/nicholasdavies/luajr>
- <https://nicholasdavies.github.io/luajr/>
- Report bugs at <https://github.com/nicholasdavies/luajr/issues>

lua

Run Lua code

Description

Runs the specified Lua code.

Usage

```
lua(code, filename = NULL, L = NULL)
```

Arguments

code	Lua code block to run.
filename	If non-NULL, name of file to run.
L	Lua state in which to run the code. NULL (default) uses the default Lua state for luajr .

Value

Lua value(s) returned by the code block converted to R object(s). Only a subset of all Lua types can be converted to R objects at present. If multiple values are returned, these are packaged in a list.

Examples

```
twelve <- lua("return 3*4")
print(twelve)
```

lua_func

*Make a Lua function callable from R***Description**

Takes any Lua expression that evaluates to a function and provides an R function that can be called to invoke the Lua function.

Usage

```
lua_func(func, argcode = "s", L = NULL)
```

Arguments

func	Lua expression evaluating to a function.
argcode	How to wrap R arguments for the Lua function.
L	Lua state in which to run the code. NULL (default) uses the default Lua state for luajr .

Details

The R types that can be passed to Lua are: NULL, logical vector, integer vector, numeric vector, string vector, list, external pointer, and raw.

The parameter `argcode` is a string with one character for each argument of the Lua function, recycled as needed (e.g. so that a single character would apply to all arguments regardless of how many there are).

In the following, the corresponding character of `argcode` for a specific argument is referred to as its `argcode`.

For NULL or any argument with length 0, the result in Lua is **nil** regardless of the corresponding `argcode`.

For logical, integer, double, and character vectors, if the corresponding `argcode` is 's' (simplify), then if the R vector has length one, it is supplied as a Lua primitive (boolean, number, number, or string, respectively), and if `length > 1`, as an array, i.e. a table with integer indices starting at 1. If the code is 'a', the vector is always supplied as an array, even if it only has length 1. If the `argcode` is the digit '1' through '9', this is the same as 's', but the vector is required to have that specific length, otherwise an error message is emitted.

Still focusing on the same vector types, if the `argcode` is 'r', then the vector is passed *by reference* to Lua, adopting the type `luajr.logical_r`, `luajr.integer_r`, `luajr.numeric_r`, or `luajr.character_r` as appropriate. If the `argcode` is 'v', the vector is passed *by value* to Lua, adopting the type `luajr.logical`, `luajr.integer`, `luajr.numeric`, or `luajr.character` as appropriate.

For a raw vector, only the 's' type is accepted and the result in Lua is a string (potentially with embedded nulls).

For lists, if the `argcode` is 's' (simplify), the list is passed as a Lua table. Any entries of the list with non-blank names are named in the table, while unnamed entries have the associated integer key in

the table. Note that Lua does not preserve the order of entries in tables. This means that an R list with names will often go "out of order" when passed into Lua with 's' and then returned back to R. This is avoided with argcode 'r' or 'v'.

If a list is passed in with the argcode 'r' or 'v', the list is passed to Lua as type `lua_jr.list`, and all vector elements of the list are passed by reference or by value, respectively.

For external pointers, the argcode is ignored and the external pointer is passed to Lua as type **userdata**.

When the function is called and Lua values are returned from the function, the Lua return values are converted to R values as follows.

If nothing is returned, the function returns `invisible()` (i.e. `NULL`).

If multiple arguments are returned, a list with all arguments is returned.

Reference types (e.g. `lua_jr.logical_r`) and vector types (e.g. `lua_jr.logical`) are returned to R as such. A `lua_jr.list` is returned as an R list. Reference and list types respect R attributes set within Lua code.

A **table** is returned as a list. In the list, any table entries with a number key come first (with indices 1 to n, i.e. the original number key's value is discarded), followed by any table entries with a string key (named accordingly). This may well scramble the order of keys, so beware. Note in particular that Lua does not guarantee that it will traverse a table in ascending order of keys. Entries with non-number, non-string keys are discarded. It is probably best to avoid returning a **table** with anything other than string keys, or to use `lua_jr.list`.

A Lua string with embedded nulls is returned as an R raw type.

Value

An R function which can be called to invoke the Lua function.

Examples

```
squared <- lua_func("function(x) return x^2 end")
print(squared(7))
```

lua_mode

Debugger, profiler, and JIT options

Description

Run Lua code with the debugger or profiler activated, and control whether the LuaJIT just-in-time compiler is on.

Usage

```
lua_mode(expr, debug, profile, jit)
```

Arguments

expr	An expression to run with the associated settings. If expr is present, the settings apply only while expr is being evaluated. If expr is missing, the settings apply until they are changed by another call to <code>lua_mode()</code> .
debug	Control the debugger: "step" / "on" / TRUE to step through each line; "error" to trigger the debugger on a Lua error; "off" / FALSE to switch the debugger off.
profile	Control the profiler: "on" / TRUE to use the profiler's default settings; a specially formatted string (see below) to control the profiler's precision and sampling interval; "off" / FALSE to switch the profiler off.
jit	Control LuaJIT's just-in-time compiler: "on" / TRUE to use the JIT, "off" / FALSE to use the LuaJIT interpreter only.

Value

When called with no arguments, returns the current settings. When called with expr, calls the value returned by expr. Otherwise, returns nothing.

Details

This function is experimental. Its interface and behaviour may change in subsequent versions of luajr.

`lua_mode()` works in one of three ways, depending on which parameters are provided.

When called with no arguments, `lua_mode()` returns the current debug, profile, and jit settings.

When called without an expr argument, but with at least one of debug, profile, or jit, the specified settings apply for any subsequent executions of Lua code until the next call to `lua_mode()`.

When called with an expr argument, the specified settings for debug, profile, and jit are applied temporarily just for the evaluation of expr in the calling frame.

Note that if you provide some but not all of the debug, profile, and jit arguments, the "missing" settings are retained at their current values, not reset to some default or "off" state. In other words, you can temporarily change one setting without affecting the others.

The debugger

The debug setting allows you to run Lua code in debug mode, using Scott Lembcke's `debugger.lua`.

Use `debug = "step"` (or TRUE or "on") to step through each line of the code; use `debug = "error"` to trigger the debugger on any Lua error; and turn off the debugger with `debug = "off"` (or FALSE).

To trigger the debugger from a specific place within your Lua code, you can also call `luajr.dbg()` from your Lua code. Within Lua, you can also use `luajr.dbg(CONDITION)` to trigger debugging only if `CONDITION` evaluates to false or nil. (In this way, `luajr.dbg(CONDITION)` is sort of like an `assert(CONDITION)` call that triggers the debugger when the assert fails.)

`debugger.lua` is more fully documented at its [github repo page](#), but briefly, you enter commands of one character at the `debugger.lua>` prompt. Use `n` to step to the next line, `q` to quit, and `h` to show a help page with all the rest of the commands.

The profiler

The `profile` setting allows you to profile your Lua code run, generating information useful for optimising its execution speed.

Use `profile = "on"` (or `TRUE`) to turn on the profiler with default settings (namely, profile at the line level and sample at 1-millisecond intervals).

Instead of "on", you can pass a string containing any of these options:

- `f`: enable profiling to the function level.
- `l`: enable profiling to the line level.
- `i<integer>`: set the sampling interval, in milliseconds (default: 1ms).

For example, the default options correspond to the string `"l1"`.

You must use `lua_profile()` to recover the generated profiling data.

JIT options

The `jit` setting allows you to turn LuaJIT's just-in-time compiler off (with `jit = "off"` or `FALSE`). The default is for the JIT compiler to be "on" (alias `TRUE`).

Lua code will generally run more slowly with the JIT off, although there have been issues reported with LuaJIT running more slowly with the JIT on for processors using ARM64 architecture, which includes Apple Silicon CPUs.

See Also

`lua_profile()` for extracting the generated profiling data.

Examples

```
## Not run:
# Debugger in "one-shot" mode
lua_mode(debug = "on",
  sum <- lua("
    local s = 0
    for i = 1,10 do
      s = s + i
    end
    return s
  ")
)

# Profiler in "switch on / switch off" mode
lua_mode(profile = TRUE)
pointless_computation = lua_func(
  "function()
    local s = startval
    for i = 1,10^8 do
      s = math.sin(s)
      s = math.exp(s^2)
      s = s + 1
    end
  end")
```

```

        end
        return s
    end")
    lua("startval = 100")
    pointless_computation()
    lua_mode(profile = FALSE)
    lua_profile()

    # Turn off JIT and turn it on again
    lua_mode(jit = "off")
    lua_mode(jit = "on")

    ## End(Not run)

```

lua_open

Create a new Lua state

Description

Creates a new, empty Lua state and returns an external pointer wrapping that state.

Usage

```
lua_open()
```

Details

All Lua code is executed within a given Lua state. A Lua state is similar to the global environment in R, in that it is where all variables and functions are defined. **luajr** automatically maintains a "default" Lua state, so most users of **luajr** will not need to use [lua_open\(\)](#).

However, if for whatever reason you want to maintain multiple different Lua states at a time, each with their own independent global variables and functions, [lua_open\(\)](#) can be used to create a new Lua state which can then be passed to [lua\(\)](#), [lua_func\(\)](#) and [lua_shell\(\)](#) via the L parameter. These functions will then operate within that Lua state instead of the default one. The default Lua state can be specified explicitly with L = NULL.

Note that there is currently no way (provided by **luajr**) of saving a Lua state to disk so that the state can be restarted later. Also, there is no `lua_close` in **luajr** because Lua states are closed automatically when they are garbage collected in R.

Value

External pointer wrapping the newly created Lua state.

Examples

```
L1 <- lua_open()
lua("a = 2")
lua("a = 4", L = L1)
lua("print(a)") # 2
lua("print(a)", L = L1) # 4
```

lua_parallel	<i>Run Lua code in parallel</i>
--------------	---------------------------------

Description

Runs a Lua function multiple times, with function runs divided among multiple threads.

Usage

```
lua_parallel(func, n, threads, pre = NA_character_)
```

Arguments

func	Lua expression evaluating to a function.
n	Number of function executions.
threads	Number of threads to create, or a list of existing Lua states (e.g. as created by lua_open()), all different, one for each thread.
pre	Lua code block to run once for each thread at creation.

Details

This function is experimental. Its interface and behaviour are likely to change in subsequent versions of luajr.

[lua_parallel\(\)](#) works as follows. A number threads of new Lua states is created with the standard Lua libraries and the luajr module opened in each (i.e. as though the states were created using [lua_open\(\)](#)). Then, a thread is launched for each state. Within each thread, the code in pre is run in the corresponding Lua state. Then, func(i) is called for each i in 1:n, with the calls spread across the states. Finally, the Lua states are closed and the results are returned in a list. The list elements are returned in the correct order, i.e. the ordering of the returned list does not depend on the actual execution order of each call to func.

Instead of an integer, threads can be a list of Lua states, e.g. NULL for the default Lua state or a state returned by [lua_open\(\)](#). This saves the time needed to open the new states, which takes a few milliseconds.

Value

List of n values returned from the Lua function func.

Safety and performance

Note that `func` has to be thread-safe. All pure Lua code and built-in Lua library functions are thread-safe, except for certain functions in the built-in **os** and **io** libraries (search for "thread safe" in the [Lua 5.2 reference manual](#)).

Additionally, use of `luajr` reference types is **not** thread-safe because these use R to allocate and manage memory, and R is not thread-safe. This means that you cannot safely use `luajr.logical_r`, `luajr.integer_r`, `luajr.numeric_r`, `luajr.character_r`, or other reference types within `func`. `luajr.list` and `luajr.dataframe` are fine, provided the list entries / dataframe columns are value types.

There is overhead associated with creating new Lua states and with gathering all the function results in an R list. It is advisable to check whether running your Lua code in parallel actually gives a substantial speed increase.

Examples

```
lua_parallel("function(i) return i end", n = 4, threads = 2)
```

lua_profile

Get profiling data

Description

After running Lua code with the profiler active (using [lua_mode\(\)](#)), use this function to get the profiling data that has been collected.

Usage

```
lua_profile(flush = TRUE)
```

Arguments

<code>flush</code>	If TRUE, clears the internal profile data buffer (default); if FALSE, doesn't. (Set to FALSE if you want to 'peek' at the profiling data collected so far, but you want to collect more data to add to this later.)
--------------------	---

Details

This function is experimental. Its interface and behaviour may change in subsequent versions of `luajr`.

Value

An object of class "lua_profile".

See Also

[lua_mode\(\)](#) for generating the profiling data.

Examples

```
## Not run:
lua_mode(profile = TRUE)
pointless_computation = lua_func(
  "function()
    local s = startval
    for i = 1,10^8 do
      s = math.sin(s)
      s = math.exp(s^2)
      s = s + 1
    end
    return s
  end")
lua("startval = 100")
pointless_computation()
lua_mode(profile = FALSE)

prof = lua_profile()

## End(Not run)
```

lua_reset

*Reset the default Lua state***Description**

Clears out all variables from the default Lua state, freeing up the associated memory.

Usage

```
lua_reset()
```

Details

This resets the default [Lua state](#) only. To reset a non-default Lua state `L` returned by [lua_open\(\)](#), just do `L <- lua_open()` again. The memory previously used will be cleaned up at the next garbage collection.

Value

None.

Examples

```
lua("a = 2")
lua_reset()
lua("print(a)") # nil
```

`lua_shell`*Run an interactive Lua shell*

Description

When in interactive mode, provides a basic read-eval-print loop with LuaJIT.

Usage

```
lua_shell(L = NULL)
```

Arguments

`L` [Lua state](#) in which to run the code. NULL (default) uses the default Lua state for **luajr**.

Details

Enter an empty line to return to R.

As a convenience, lines starting with an equals sign have the "=" replaced with "return ", so that e.g. entering =x will show the value of x as returned to R.

Value

None.

Index

- lua, [3](#)
- Lua state, [3](#), [4](#), [11](#), [12](#)
- lua(), [2](#), [8](#)
- lua_func, [4](#)
- lua_func(), [2](#), [8](#)
- lua_mode, [5](#)
- lua_mode(), [6](#), [10](#)
- lua_open, [8](#)
- lua_open(), [2](#), [8](#), [9](#), [11](#)
- lua_parallel, [9](#)
- lua_parallel(), [2](#), [9](#)
- lua_profile, [10](#)
- lua_profile(), [7](#)
- lua_reset, [11](#)
- lua_reset(), [2](#)
- lua_shell, [12](#)
- lua_shell(), [2](#), [8](#)
- luajr (luajr-package), [2](#)
- luajr-package, [2](#)