
Python support for the Linux perf profiler

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The Linux `perf` profiler is a very powerful tool that allows you to profile and obtain information about the performance of your application. `perf` also has a very vibrant ecosystem of tools that aid with the analysis of the data that it produces.

The main problem with using the `perf` profiler with Python applications is that `perf` only gets information about native symbols, that is, the names of functions and procedures written in C. This means that the names and file names of Python functions in your code will not appear in the output of `perf`.

Since Python 3.12, the interpreter can run in a special mode that allows Python functions to appear in the output of the `perf` profiler. When this mode is enabled, the interpreter will interpose a small piece of code compiled on the fly before the execution of every Python function and it will teach `perf` the relationship between this piece of code and the associated Python function using `perf` map files.

Note: Support for the `perf` profiler is currently only available for Linux on select architectures. Check the output of the `configure` build step or check the output of `python -m sysconfig | grep HAVE_PERF_TRAMPOLINE` to see if your system is supported.

For example, consider the following script:

```
def foo(n):
    result = 0
    for _ in range(n):
        result += 1
    return result
```

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...

As you can see, the Python functions are not shown in the output, only `_PyEval_EvalFrameDefault` (the function that evaluates the Python bytecode) shows up. Unfortunately that's not very useful because all Python functions use the same C function to evaluate bytecode so we cannot know which Python function corresponds to which bytecode-evaluating function.

Instead, if we run the same experiment with `perf` support enabled we get:

```

$ perf report --stdio -n -g
# Children      Self          Samples  Command      Shared Object      Symbol
# .....      .....      .....      .....      .....      .....
#
90.58%      0.36%          1  python.exe  python.exe        [.] _start
|
---_start
|
--89.86%--__libc_start_main
      Py_BytesMain
|
|--55.43%--pymain_run_python.constprop.0
|
|--54.71%--_PyRun_AnyFileObject
|      _PyRun_SimpleFileObject
|
|--53.62%--run_mod
|
|--53.26%--PyEval_EvalCode
py::

```

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