

Cool Solution Article

Easter eggs for Linux Desktop

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Introduction

In computing world, Easter eggs are kind of undocumented features, messages, graphics, sound effects etc, which are invoked in response to some undocumented set of user actions. There have been instances of complete flight simulator program embedded in a spreadsheet program. Similarly there are certain undocumented features exists, right there on your Novell Linux Desktop.

Open source application means you have access to source code. This makes it little difficult to include easter eggs in the applications. Despite of that developers of open source application have managed to include some easter eggs in open source. This article includes easter eggs within Gnome and some of the most popular open source applications.

Gnome

Wanda the Fish

Feeling lonely while working on your NLD? Don't worry, Gnome Panel developers have provided you with a friendly fish. There are two ways to call the fish (as shown in **Figure-1**)

- 1) Open RUN Application dialog and type "free the fish". As soon as you run this command you would see the fish entering your desktop and sailing across.
- 2) Another way to invoke the fish is through Gnome Panel About Dialog window. Launch About window for Panel and press "F" key three times (FFF).

Once activated this fish appears on your desktop at random intervals and remains at top of all the windows. If you click on the fish, it would obediently rush away from your view via nearest vertical side of your desktop. At times you may find this fish a little annoying but still you would like it. Enjoy Fishing!

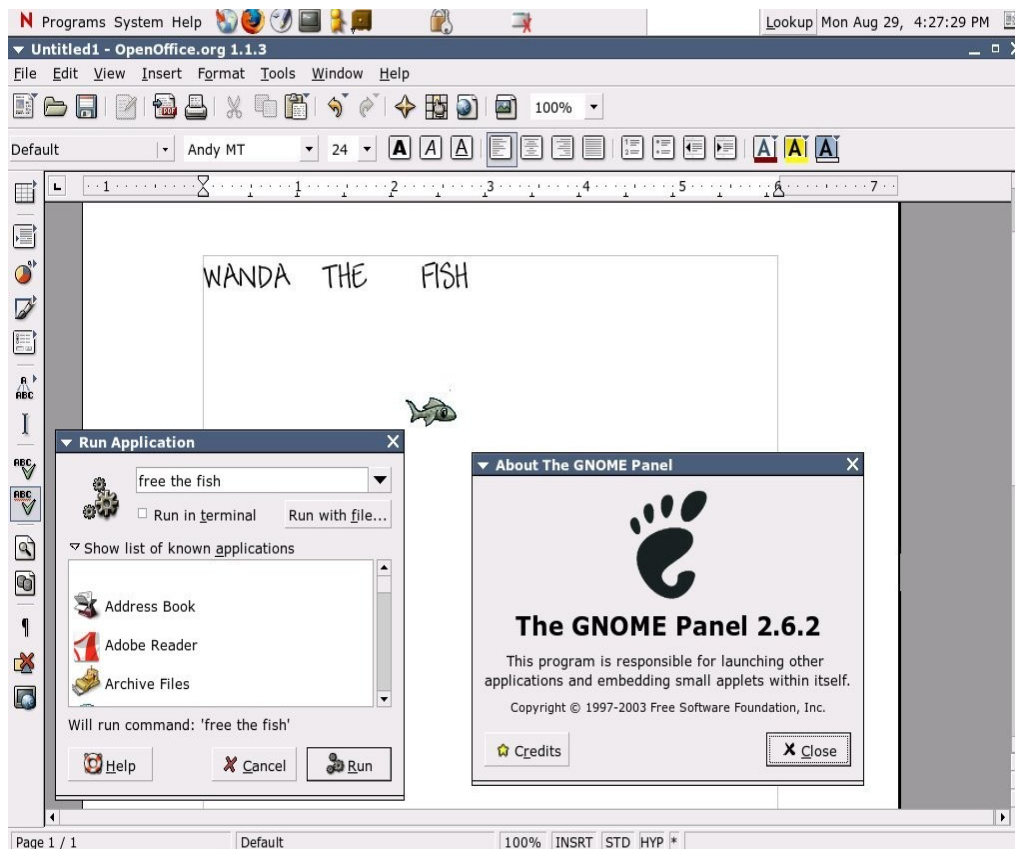


Figure-1: Wanda Fish on NLD

Killer GEGLs.

Gnome also has one more animal associated with it - its called Genetically Engineered Goat Large (GEGl). You can catch this animal on NLD in the form of a game. There is an hidden game in Gnome, its called *Killer GEGLs from the outer space*.

1. Open RUN Application dialog and type - “gegl from outer space”.
2. Press Run.

And here you go - what you get is a game application where GEGLs are trying to kill your friend Wanda the Fish. To save your fish from dropping shells, use right and left arrow keys. Although very simple, this game can get very engaging once you start playing it. **Figure-2** shows the game window on Novell Linux Desktop.

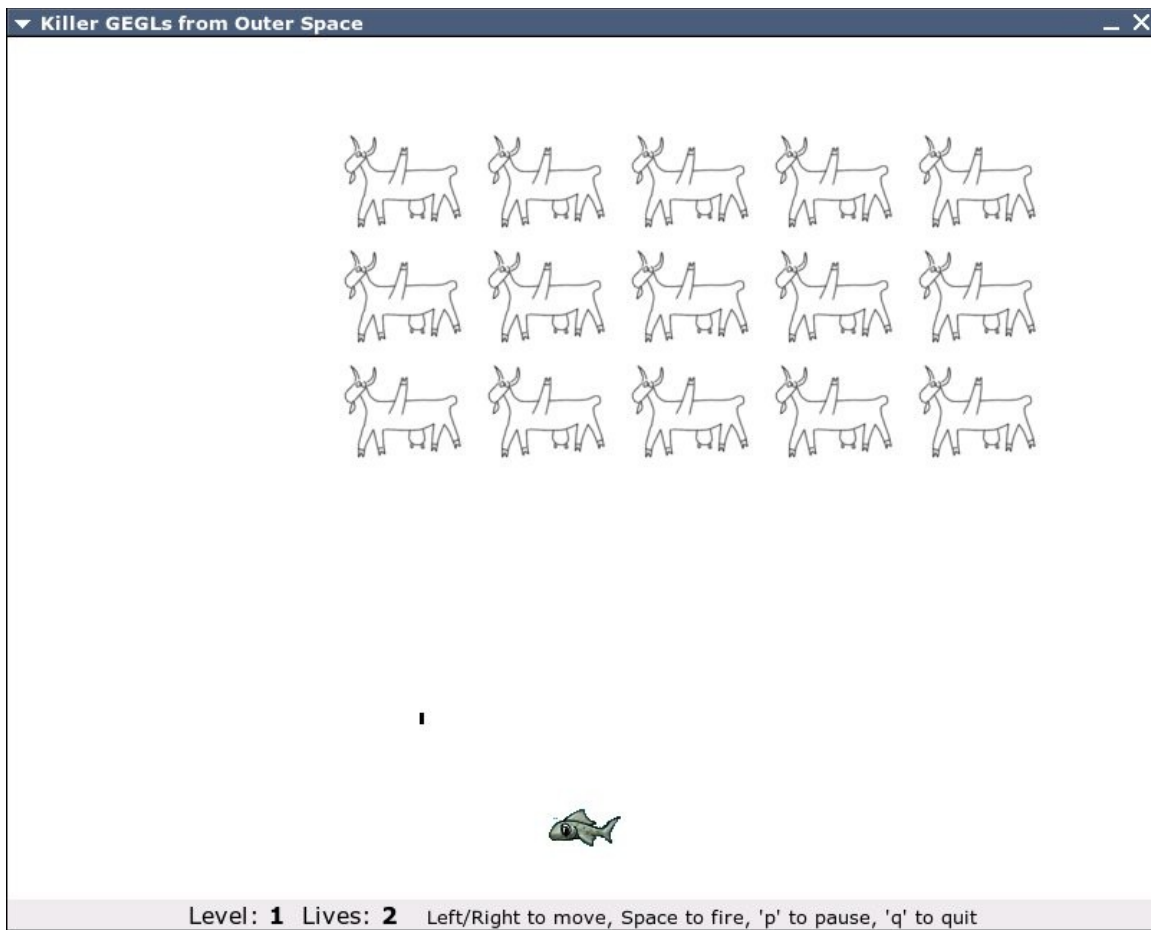


Figure-2: Killer GEGLs game on NLD

Hidden Quote in Mozilla

Firefox is one of the most popular browser based on Mozilla and is a major success story among Open Source projects. If you want to know the philosophy behind the success of Mozilla then Open your firefox browser and try accessing following URL

about:mozilla

And you will get the story behind firefox as shown in *Figure-3*.

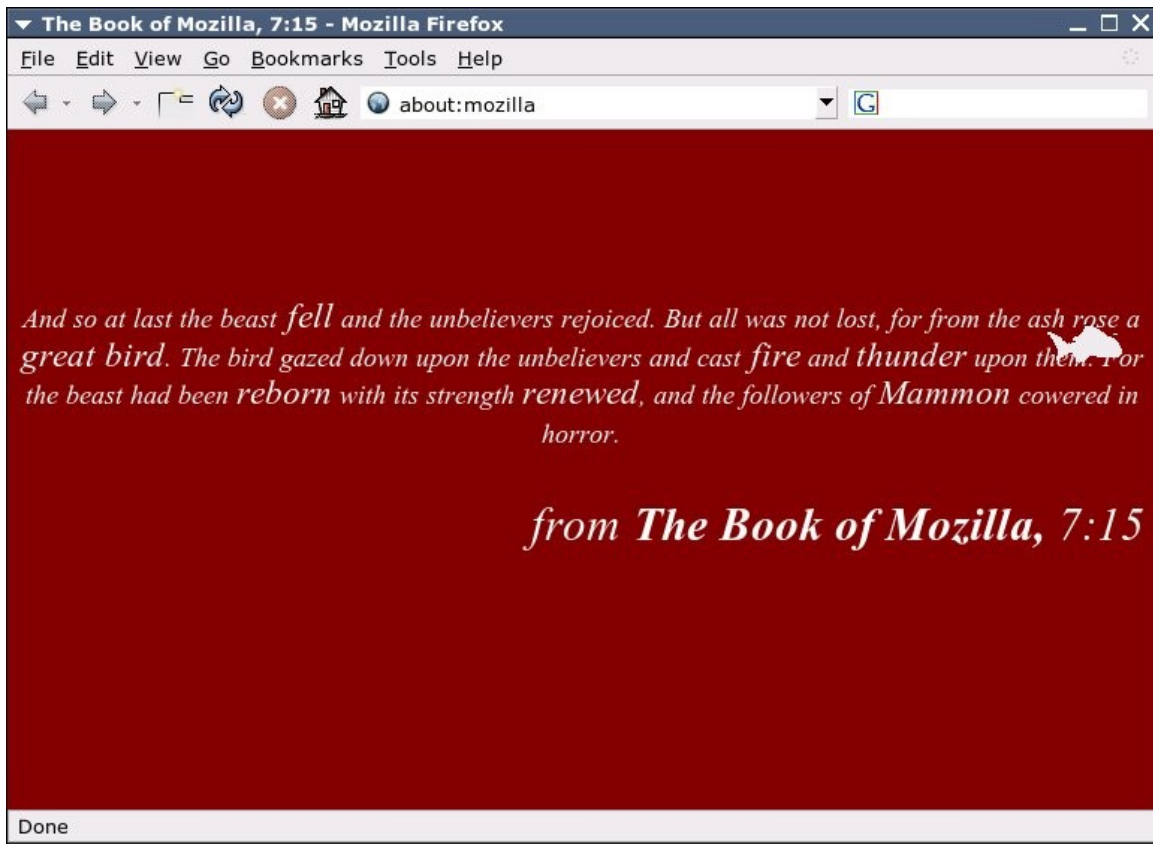


Figure-3: The book of Mozilla (on Firefox Browser)

OpenOffice

OpenOffice is one of those bigger Open Source projects, where you can expect to find easter egg. There are two popular easter eggs in OpenOffice.

OpenOffice.org Writer

Want to know who are the original developers behind OpenOffice writer, then you can check the details of Star Office Writer team through following Easter Egg:

1. Launch OpenOffice.org Writer.
2. Type *StarWriterTeam* and press F3.

And you will meet with the following (**Figure-4**):

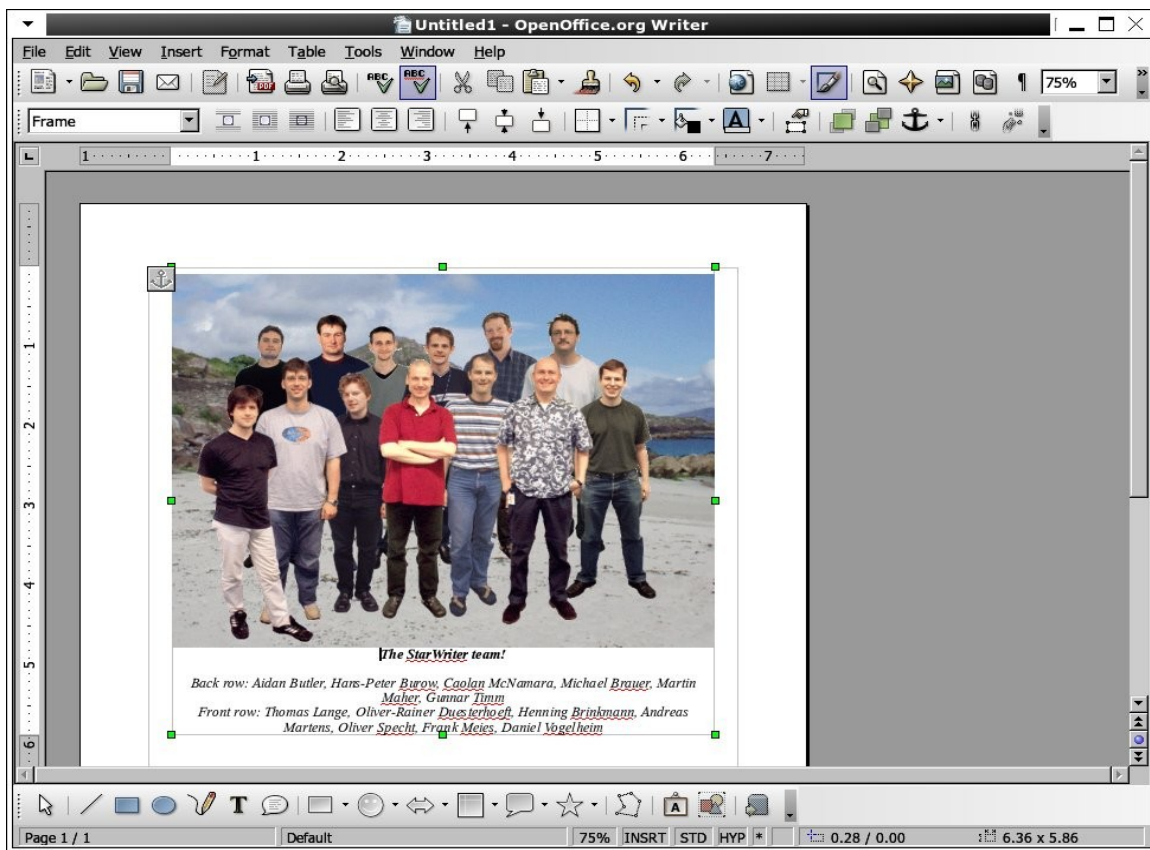


Figure-4: OpenOffice.org Writer (StarWriterTeam)

OpenOffice.org Calc

Do you think spreadsheets are only for serious business and accounting, then you must read the following. OpenOffice.org Calc developers thought that it can also be used for some fun. Infact you can play a whole StarWars games from within OpenOffice.org Calc application.

1. Launch OpenOffice.org Calc application
2. Enter the following text in an empty cell `=GAME("StarWars")`
3. And enjoy your game as shown in *Figure-5*.

NOTE: This may not work with OpenOffice 1.x version, but is most likely to work with OpenOffice.org 2.0 Spreadsheet.

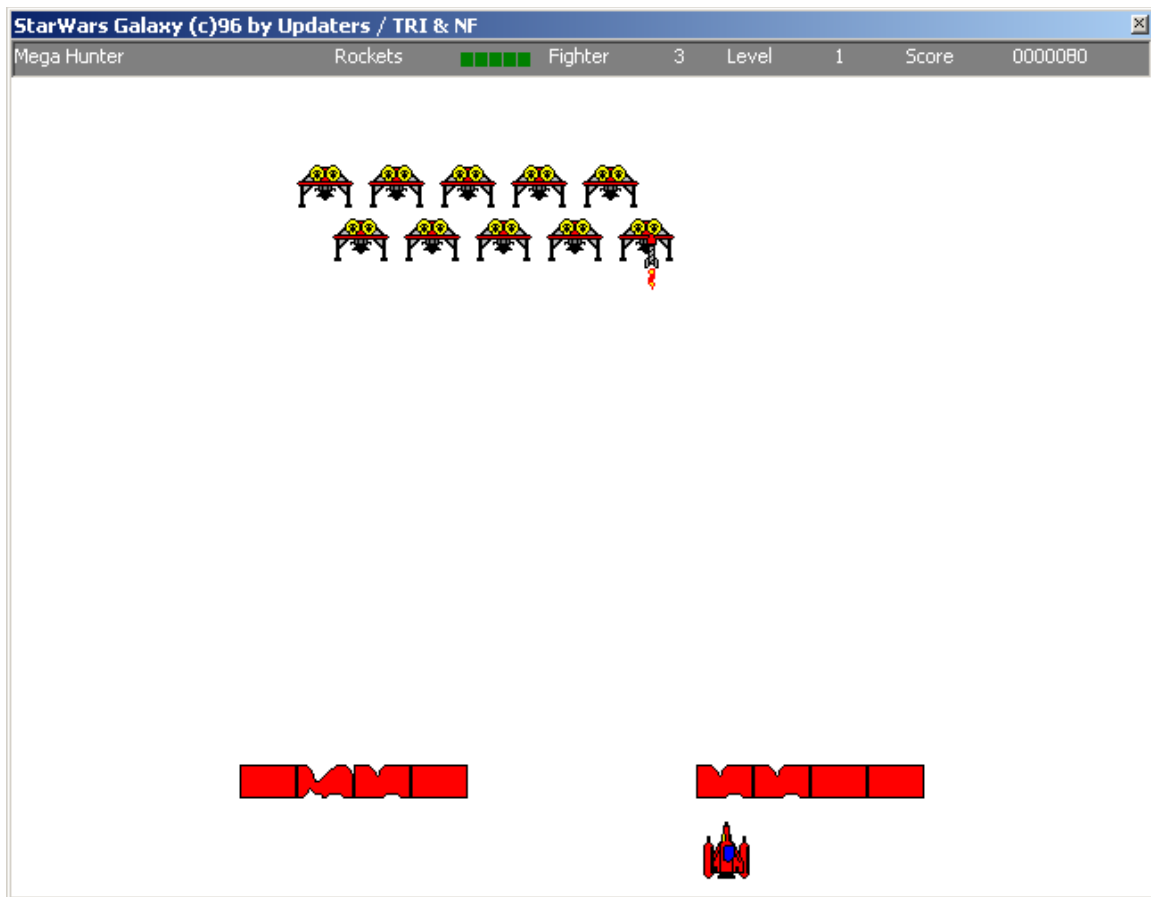


Figure-5: OpenOffice.org Calc StarWars game

GIMP

You can learn about most of the programs and their contributors through Help -> About dialog. In GIMP you can launch the About Dialog in one more way:

1. Launch GIMP program
2. Press CTRL key and open Help -> About dialog box.
3. Get the information about some more contributors

GIMP used to have other Easter Eggs which have now been converted to official filters known as Toys: GEE Slime and GEE Zoom.

Hope these tricks would make the Linux at your desktop a little more FUN!