Further Abstraction Techniques

Abstract classes and interfaces

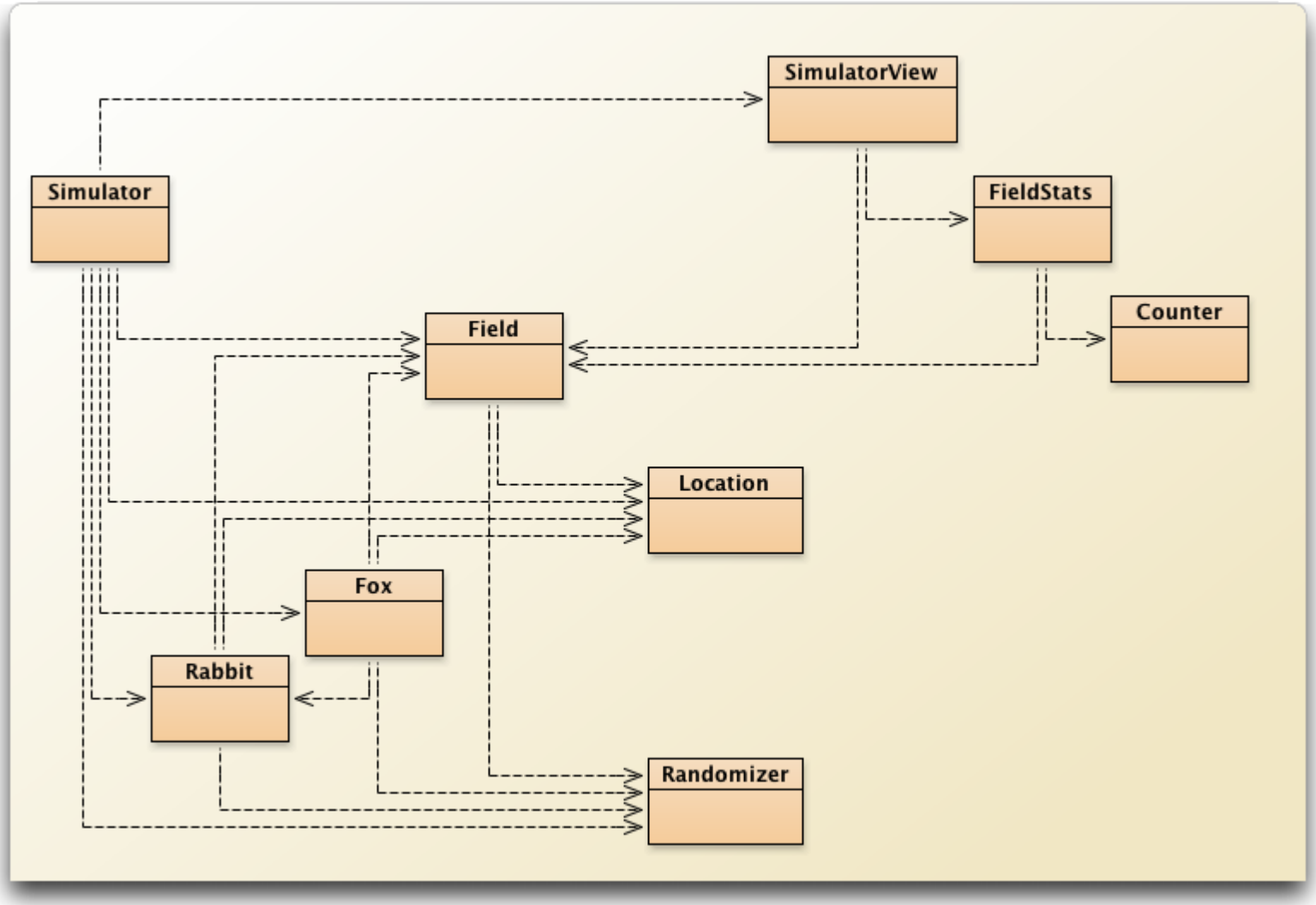
Chapter-10;

Objects First with Java using BlueJ (5th edition)

Simulations

- Programs are regularly used to simulate real-world activities :
  - city traffic
  - the weather
  - nuclear processes
  - stock market fluctuations
  - environmental changes

The foxes-and-rabbits project



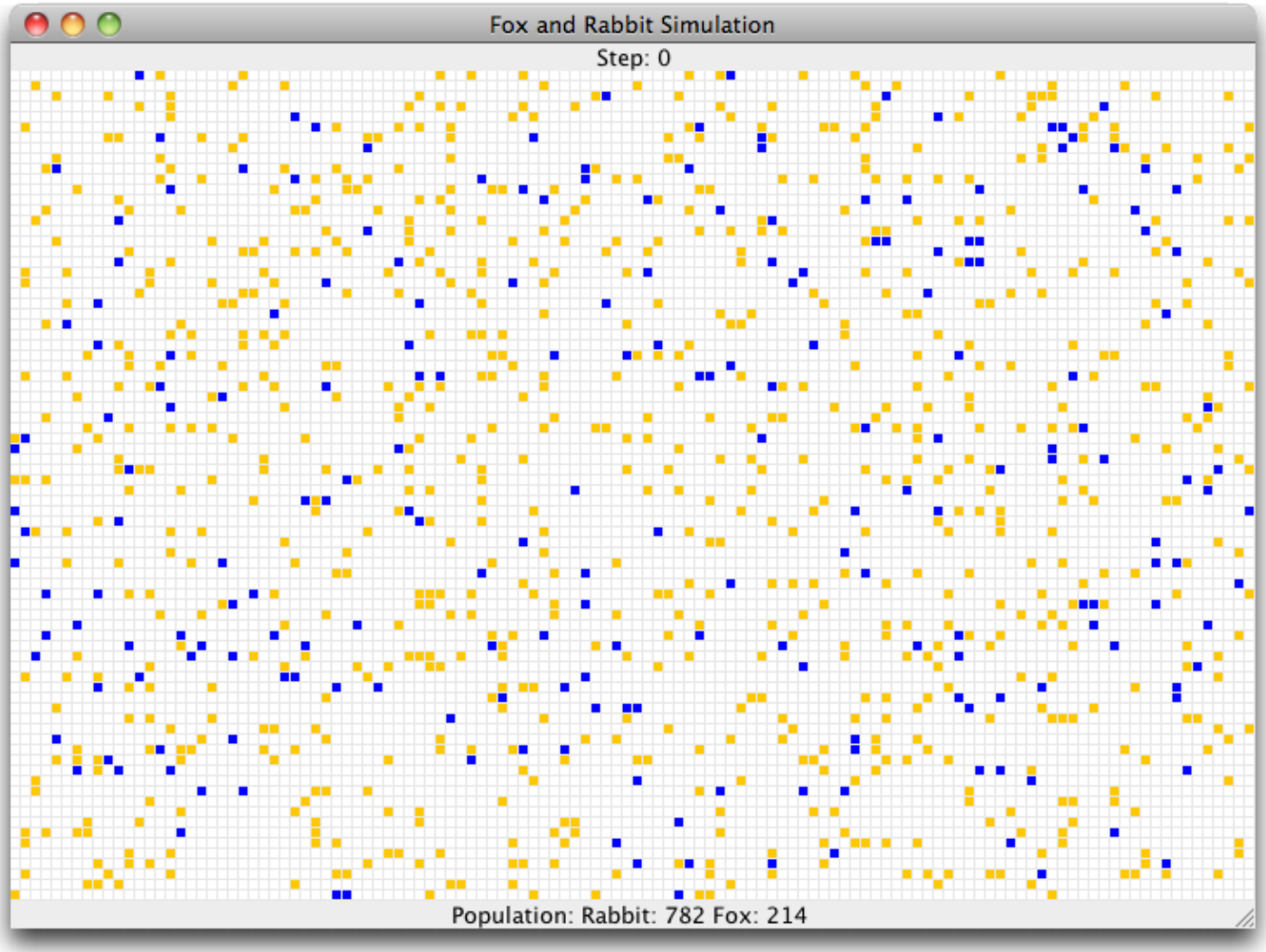
Main classes of interest

- **`Fox`**
  - Simple model of a type of predator.
- **`Rabbit`**
  - Simple model of a type of prey.
- **`Simulator`**
  - Manages the overall simulation task.
  - Holds a collection of foxes and rabbits.

The remaining classes

- **`Field`**
  - Represents a 2D field.
- **`Location`**
  - Represents a 2D position.
- **`SimulatorView`**, **`FieldStats`**, **`Counter`**
  - Maintain statistics and present a view of the field.

Example of the visualization



A Rabbit's state

```
public class Rabbit {

    Static fields omitted.

    // Individual characteristics (instance fields).

    // The rabbit's age.
    private int age;
    // Whether the rabbit is alive or not.
    private boolean alive;
    // The rabbit's position
    private Location location;
    // The field occupied
    private Field field;

    Methods omitted.
}
```

A Rabbit's behavior

- Managed from the **`run`** method.
- Age incremented at each simulation 'step'.
  - A rabbit could die at this point.
- Rabbits that are old enough might breed at each step.
  - New rabbits could be born at this point.

A Fox's state

```
public class Fox {

    Static fields omitted

    // The fox's age.
    private int age;
    // Whether the fox is alive or not.
    private boolean alive;
    // The fox's position
    private Location location;
    // The field occupied
    private Field field;
    // The fox's food level, which is increased
    // by eating rabbits.
    private int foodLevel;

    Methods omitted.
}
```

A Fox's behavior

- Managed from the **`hunt`** method.
- Foxes also age and breed.
- They become hungry.
- They hunt for food in adjacent locations.

The Simulator class

- Three key components:
  - Setup in the constructor.
  - The **`populate`** method.
    - Each animal is given a random starting age.
  - The **`simulateOneStep`** method.
    - Iterates over separate populations of foxes and rabbits.
    - Two **`Field`** objects are used: **`field`** and **`updatedField`**.

The update step

```
for (Iterator<Rabbit> it = rabbits.iterator(); it.hasNext(); ) {
    Rabbit rabbit = it.next();
    rabbit.run(newRabbits);
    if (! rabbit.isAlive())
        it.remove();
}

...

for (Iterator<Fox> it = foxes.iterator(); it.hasNext(); ) {
    Fox fox = it.next();
    fox.hunt(newFoxes);
    if (! fox.isAlive())
        it.remove();
}
```

Room for improvement

- **`Fox`** and **`Rabbit`** have strong similarities but do not have a common superclass.
- The **`update`** step involves similar-looking code.
- The **`Simulator`** is tightly coupled to specific classes.
  - It 'knows' a lot about the behavior of foxes and rabbits.

The Animal superclass

- Place common attributes in **`Animal`**:
  - **`age, alive, location`**
- Keep differences in subclasses:
  - **`run`** and **`hunt`** stay in **`Fox`** and **`Rabbit`**.

Revised iteration

```
for (Iterator<Animal> it = animals.iterator(); it.hasNext(); ) {
    Animal animal = it.next();
    if (animal instanceof Rabbit) {
        Rabbit rabbit = (Rabbit) animal;
        rabbit.run(newAnimals);
    }
    else if (animal instanceof Fox) {
        Fox fox = (Fox) animal;
        fox.hunt(newAnimals);
    }
    // Remove dead animals from the simulation.
    if (! animal.isAlive())
        it.remove();
}
```

The better Animal superclass

- Method renaming to support information hiding:
  - **`run`** and **`hunt`** become **`act`**.
- **`Simulator`** can now be significantly decoupled.

Revised (decoupled) iteration

```
for (Iterator<Animal> it = animals.iterator(); it.hasNext(); ) {
    Animal animal = iter.next();
    animal.act(newAnimals);
    // Remove dead animals from simulation
    if(! animal.isAlive())
        it.remove();
}
```

The act method of Animal

- Static type checking requires an **`act`** method in **`Animal`**.
- There is no obvious shared implementation.
- Define **`act`** as abstract:

```
abstract public void act(List<Animal> newAnimals);
```

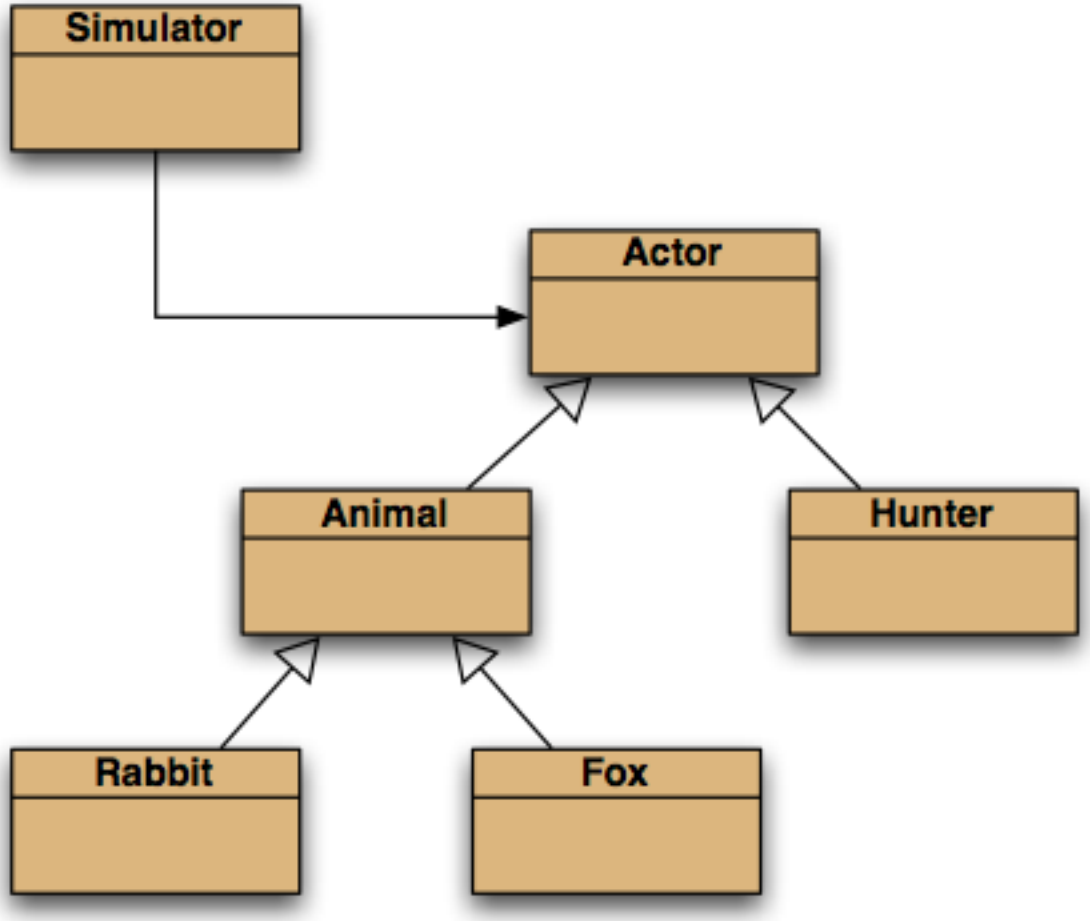
Abstract classes and methods

- Abstract methods have **`abstract`** in the signature.
- Abstract methods have no body.
- Abstract methods make the class abstract.
- Abstract classes cannot be instantiated.
- Concrete subclasses complete the implementation.

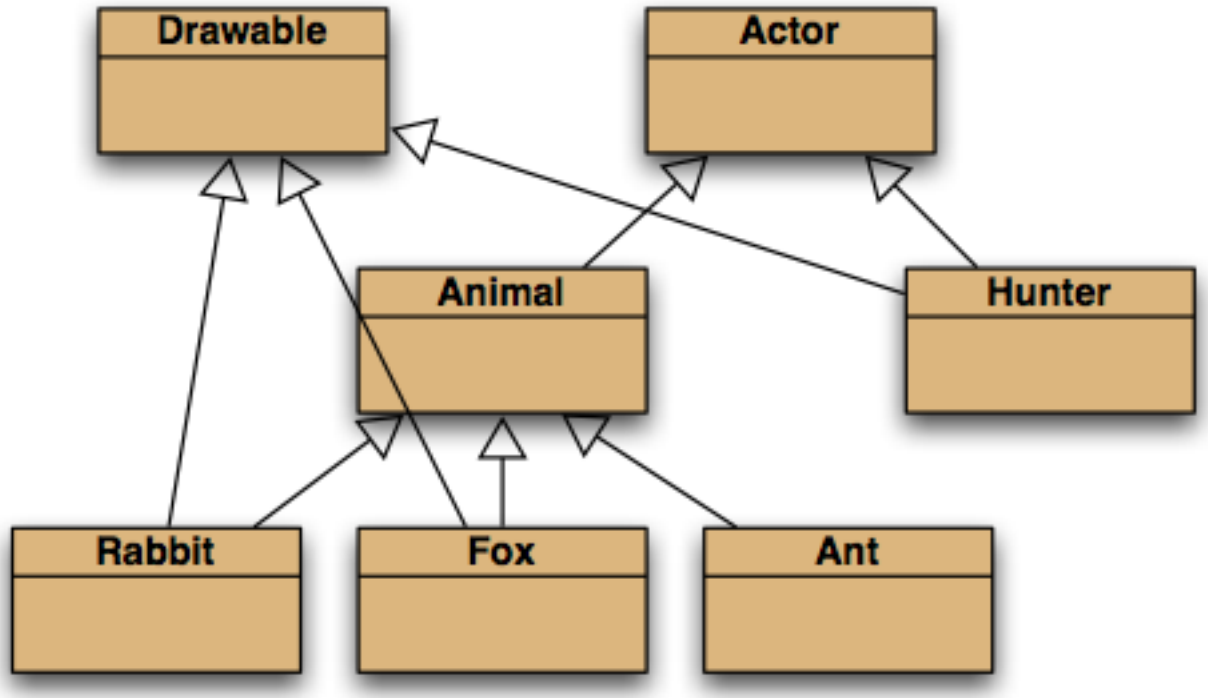
The Animal class

```
public abstract class Animal {

    fields omitted

    /**
     * Make this animal act - that is: make it do
     * whatever it wants/needs to do.
     */
    abstract public void act(List<Animal> newAnimals);

    other methods omitted
}
```

Further abstraction



Selective drawing (multiple inheritance)



Multiple inheritance

- Having a class inherit directly from multiple ancestors.
- Each language has its own rules.
  - How to resolve competing definitions?
- Java forbids it for classes.
- Java permits it for interfaces.
  - No competing implementation.

An Actor interface

```
public interface Actor {

    /**
     * Perform the actor's regular behavior.
     * @param newActors  A list for storing newly
     *                   created actors.
     */
    void act(List<Actor> newActors);

    /**
     * Is the actor still active?
     * @return true if still active, false if not.
     */
    boolean isActive();
}
```

Classes implement an interface

```
public class Fox extends Animal implements Drawable {

    ...

}
```

```
 public class Hunter implements Actor, Drawable {

     ...

 }
```

Interfaces as types

- Implementing classes do not inherit method implementations, but ... implementing classes are subtypes of the interface type.
- So, polymorphism is available with interfaces as well as classes.

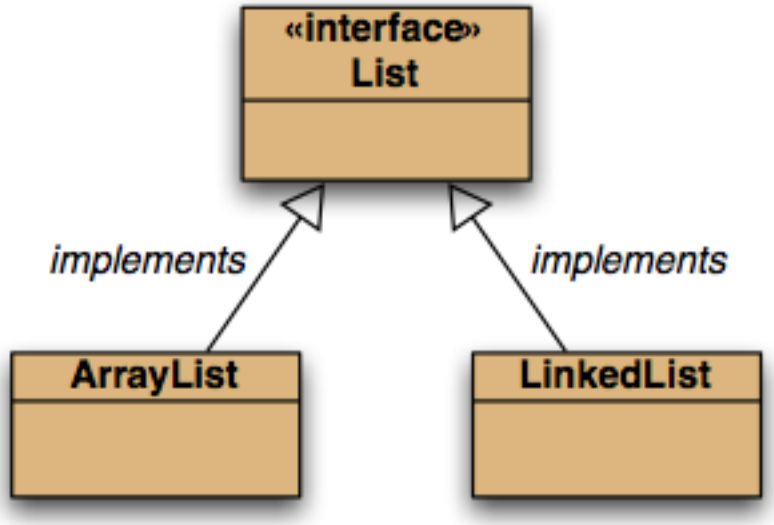
Features of interfaces

- All methods are abstract.
- There are no constructors.
- All methods are public.
- All fields are public, static and final.

Interfaces as specifications

- Strong separation of definition from implementation.
  - Though parameter and return types are mandated.
- Clients interact independently of the implementation.
  - But clients can choose from alternative implementations.

Alternative implementations



The `Class` class

- A **`Class`** object is returned by **`getClass()`** in **`Object`**.
- The **`.class`** suffix provides a **`Class`** object:

```
Fox.class
```

- Used in **`SimulatorView`**:

```
Map<Class, Color> colors;
```

- **`String getName()`** for the class name.
- https://www.leepoint.net/other/90introspection/10classclass.html

Review

- Inheritance can provide shared implementation.
  - Concrete and abstract classes.
- Inheritance provides shared type information.
  - Classes and interfaces.

Review

- Abstract methods allow static type checking without requiring implementation.
- Abstract classes function as incomplete superclasses.
  - No instances.
- Abstract classes support polymorphism.

Review

- Interfaces provide specification without implementation.
  - Interfaces are fully abstract.
- Interfaces support polymorphism.
- Java interfaces support multiple inheritance.