

Configurator

A configuration management utility
Release 0.1

by Mariano Montone

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1 Introduction

Configurator is a configuration management utility.

You can get a copy and this manual at <http://mmontone.github.io/configurator>

1.1 Summary

Configurator is a configuration management utility

1.2 Installation

1.3 Feedback

Mail marianomontone at gmail dot com with feedback

1.4 Conventions

Here are some coding conventions we'd like to follow:

- We *do* believe in documentation. Document your dynamic variables, functions, macros and classes. Besides, provide a documentation from a wider perspective. Provide diagrams and architecture documentation; examples and tutorials, too. Consider using an automatic documentation generator (see the bitacora package in the dependencies).
- We don't want functions to be shorter than they should nor longer than they should. There is no "every function should have at most ten lines of code" rule. We think that coding is like literature to a great extent. So you should strive for beauty and clarity.

2 Overview

Configurator is a configuration management utility. It is written in Python and provides a Tk GUI at the moment.

The idea is to define configuration schemas and get a proper way of:

- Sharing and versioning your project's configuration schemas, but not your configurations. That way, you avoid overwriting configurations from different developers. Each developer has his own configurations that need to match the configuration schemas in the project. Whenever a project's configuration schema changes, each developer is responsible of updating his configurations to match the new schemas.
- Being able to define configuration schemas from the GUI, with no need for programming for most cases.
- Provide configurations documentation and validation.
- Edit configurations from a GUI.
- Define your own option configurations types and provide validation for them.

3 Running

3.1 Running overview

Configurator is run invoking *configurator* command from the command line. By default, it runs in normal mode; that means, it opens a GUI for adding, removing and editing configurations.

A configurations schemas files is required. By default, Configurator looks for *configurator.schema* in the current directory. It shows and errors if it can not find it. A different file or location can be specified through the *-schemas SCHEMAS* option.

If the schemas file is found, then it is parsed and loaded. The schemas file is in XML format.

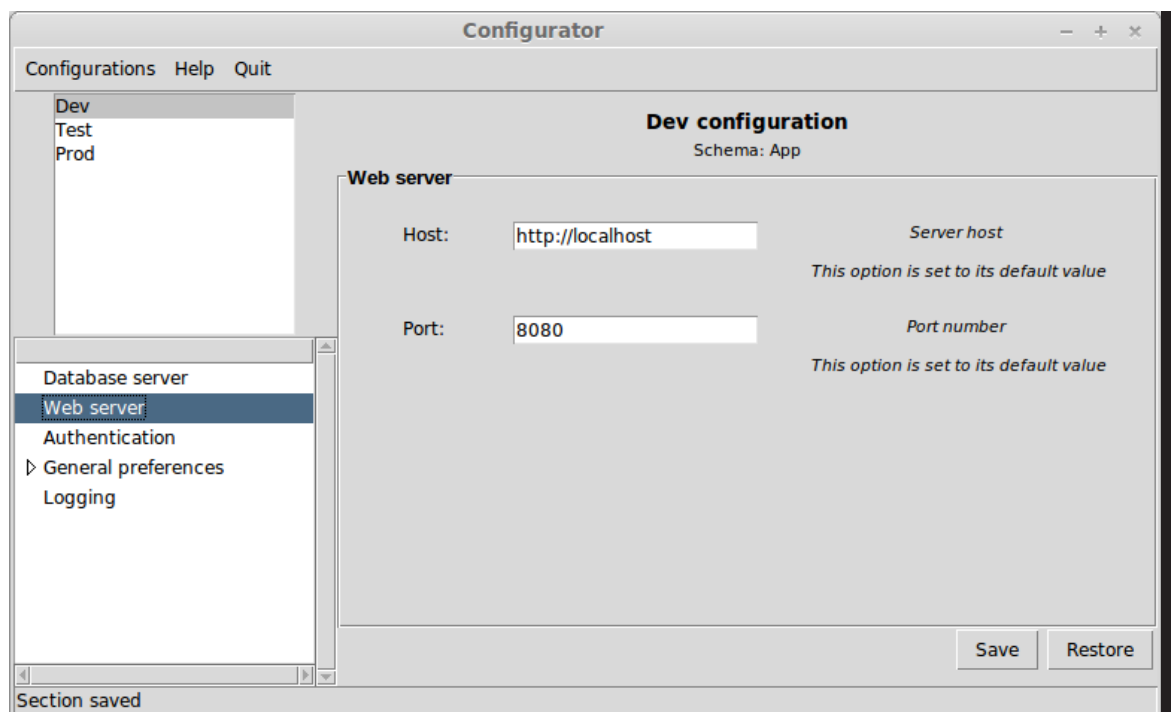
Apart from that, Configurator maintains configurations in another file, which by default is *configurator.config*. It can be specified to be something else through the *-configs CONFIGS* option.

3.2 Running modes

Configurator can be run in three different modes fundamentally.

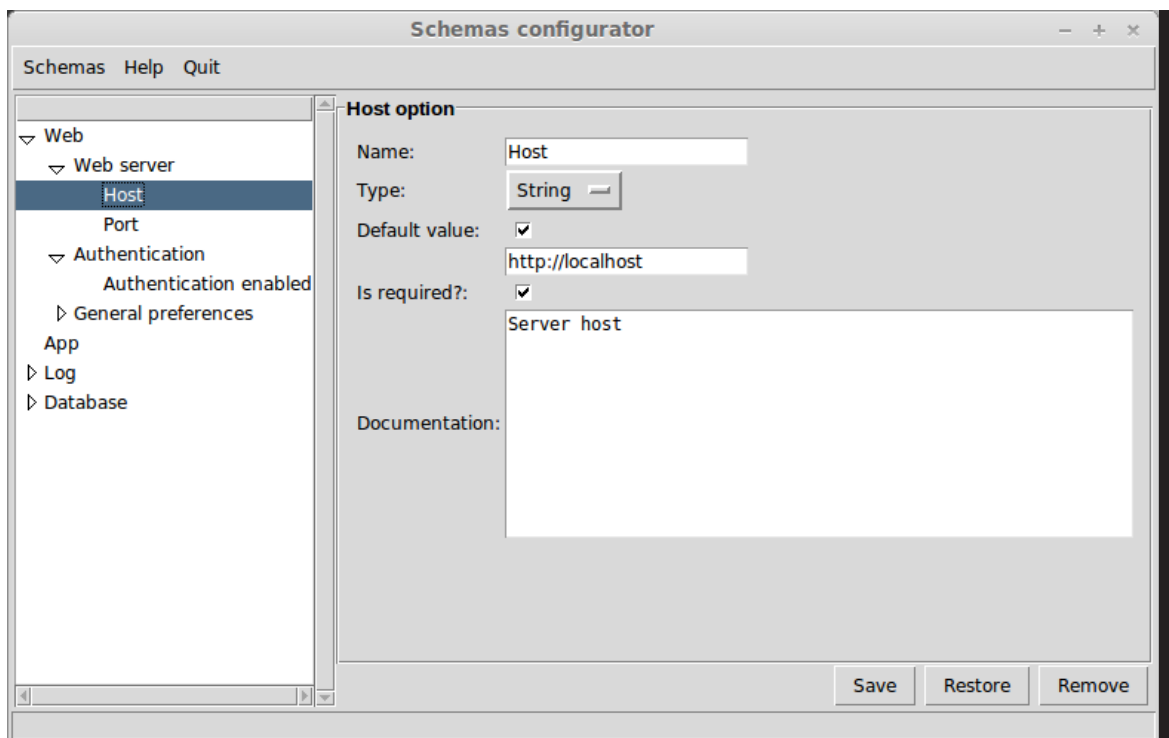
- *Normal mode*: this mode is invoked running configurator with no special arguments from the command line (apart from the schema and configs arguments). In this mode, the standard configuration navigation UI is opened. This UI is meant for end users. The user can create, remove and edit his configurations from here. He doesn't need to know how to build a configuration schema (although that is not difficult at all, as we will see.) Apart from that, when editing the configuration, the user gets a (hopefully) decent UI with custom option editors depending on the type of options and validation.

This is an example of Configurator running in normal mode:



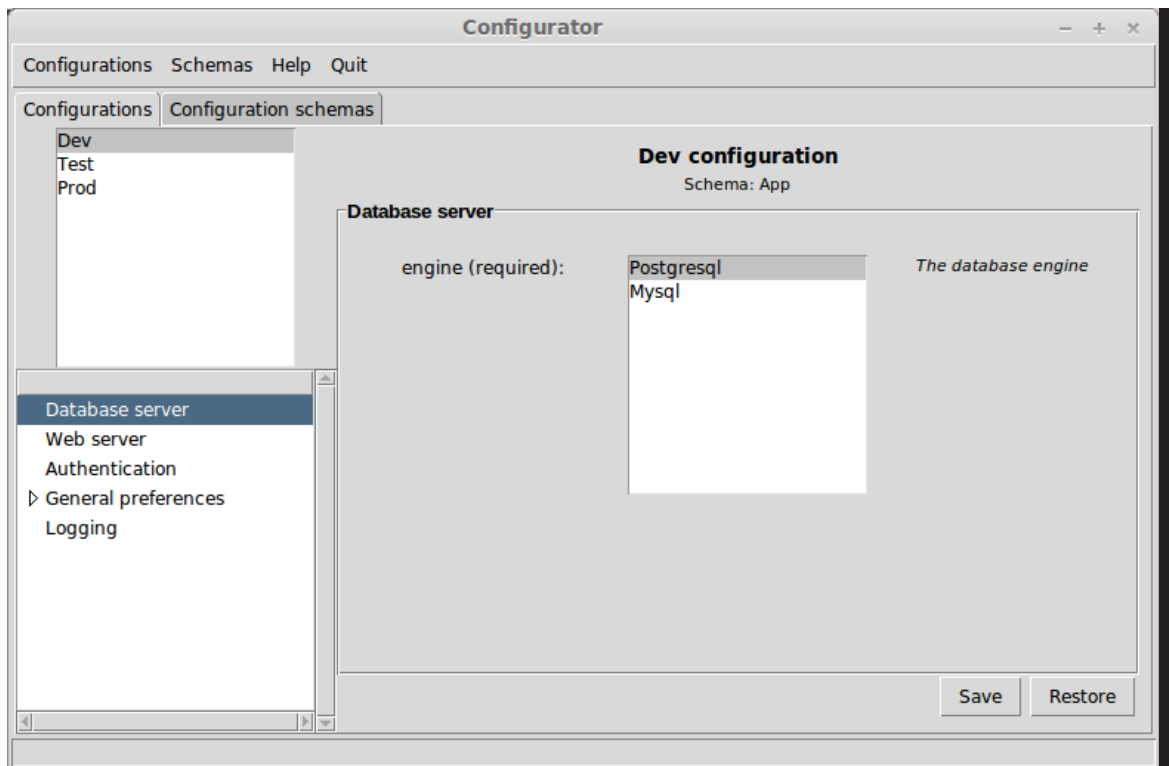
- *Setup mode*: this mode is invoked running configurator with the `-setup` option from the command line. In this mode, the configuration schemas navigator UI is opened. The developer can create, remove and edit configuration schemas from here. Configuration schemas are descriptions of how configurations should be, with nested sections and different type of options. He can build the application specific configuration schemas from here.

This is an example of Configurator running in setup mode:



- *Full mode*: this mode is invoked running configurator with the *-full* option from the command line. In this mode, both the configurations navigator and the configurations schemas navigator are available in two different tabs.

This is an example of Configurator running in full mode:



3.3 Command line summary

```
$> configurator -h
```

```
usage: configurator.py [-h] [-f] [-s SCHEMAS] [-c CONFIGS] [--setup] [--debug]
```

Configurator. Configuration management utility.

optional arguments:

-h, --help	show this help message and exit
-f, --full	Run the full configurator (both configurations and schemas navigation)
-s SCHEMAS, --schemas SCHEMAS	The configuration schemas files. Default is configurator.schema
-c CONFIGS, --configs CONFIGS	The configurations file. Default is configurator.config
--setup	Edit configuration schemas
--debug	Run in debug mode

4 Configuration schemas

Configuration schemas define the structure of a configuration.

- *configuration-schema-name* is the name of the configuration-schema and the configuration-schema is globally identified by it. See *find-configuration-schema*
- *parent-configuration-schema* is the configuration schema we inherit from. Inheriting from a configuration schema means adding its sections to the child schema. Configuration schemas can inherit from several parents
- *configuration-schema-documentation* is the configuration schema documentation. This is not a required argument. It is also used from the editing GUI and is very useful for the configuration schema user.

That is a typical configuration schema needed to connect to a database.

It has only one section *Database* where the user is supposed to specify the connection type, the database name, the username, password, and extra parameters needed to connect to a database. In this case, most of the options are of type *String*.

4.1 Built-in option types

4.1.1 String

The String option type ensures that the the option value is of type string.

4.1.2 Number

The Number option type ensures that the the option value is of type Number.

4.1.3 Boolean

The boolean option type ensures that the the option value is of type boolean (True or False).

4.1.4 Email

The email option type ensures that the the option value is a valid email string.

4.1.5 Url

The url option ensures that the the option value is a valid url.

4.1.6 Filename

The pathaname option type ensures that the the option value is a valid pathname and the file or directory exists.

4.1.7 Choice

The Choice option type ensures that the option value is one of the options listed.

4.1.8 List

The *List* option type ensures that the option value is a subset of the options listed.

5 Configurations

How to define configurations

5.1 Working with configurations

The API for working with configurations

5.2 Configurations serialization

There are two output backends: an sexp-backend and a xml-backend

6 Examples

Schemas definitions:

```
<schemas>
  <schema name="Web">
    <documentation></documentation>
    <section name="Web server">
      <documentation></documentation>
      <option name="Host">
        <documentation>Server host</documentation>
        <type name="String"/>
        <required>True</required>
        <default>http://localhost</default>
      </option>
      <option name="Port">
        <documentation>Port number</documentation>
        <type name="Number"/>
        <required>True</required>
        <default>8080</default>
      </option>
    </section>
    <section name="Authentication">
      <documentation></documentation>
      <option name="Authentication enabled">
        <documentation>Enable authentication?</documentation>
        <type name="Boolean"/>
        <required>False</required>
      </option>
    </section>
    <section name="General preferences">
      <documentation></documentation>
      <option name="Font size">
        <documentation>Font size</documentation>
        <type name="Number"/>
        <required>True</required>
      </option>
      <section name="Colors">
        <documentation></documentation>
        <option name="Background color">
          <documentation>Background color</documentation>
          <type name="Color"/>
          <required>True</required>
        </option>
      </section>
    </section>
  </schema>
  <schema name="App">
```

```

    <documentation></documentation>
    <parent name="Database"/>
    <parent name="Web"/>
    <parent name="Log"/>
</schema>
<schema name="Log">
    <documentation></documentation>
    <section name="Logging">
        <documentation></documentation>
        <option name="Logfile">
            <documentation>Where the logging happens</documentation>
            <type name="Filename"/>
            <required>True</required>
        </option>
        <option name="Expire">
            <documentation>Expiration</documentation>
            <type name="Datetime"/>
            <required>True</required>
        </option>
    </section>
</schema>
<schema name="Database">
    <documentation></documentation>
    <section name="Database server">
        <documentation></documentation>
        <option name="engine">
            <documentation>The database engine</documentation>
            <type name="Choice">
                <option value="Postgresql"/>
                <option value="Mysql"/>
            </type>
            <required>True</required>
        </option>
    </section>
</schema>
</schemas>

```

Configurations definitions:

```

<configurations>
    <configuration name="Dev">
        <schema name="App"/>
        <option path="Database.Database server.engine" value="Postgresql"/>
    </configuration>
    <configuration name="Test">
        <schema name="App"/>
        <parent name="Dev"/>
        <option path="Database.Database server.engine" value="Mysql"/>
    </configuration>
</configurations>

```

```
</configuration>
<configuration name="Prod">
  <schema name="Web"/>
  <option path="Web.Authentication.Authentication enabled" value="True"/>
  <option path="Web.General preferences.Colors.Background color" value="#6ed9d9"/>
</configuration>
</configurations>
```

6.1 Use cases

6.1.1 Debugging

6.1.2 Logging

6.1.3 Testing

6.1.4 Deployment

7 Frontend

Configurations can be edited from a Tk interface.

8 Custom option types

How to define custom option types

9 System reference

10 References

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11.1 Concept Index

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11.2 Class Index

(Index is nonexistent)

11.3 Function Index

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11.4 Variable Index

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