Ruby master - Feature #12591

Allow ruby to either catch misspelled "ailas" statements or, possibly more accurately, be more specific in what it reports as an error to the end-user

07/18/2016 05:10 AM - shevegen (Robert A. Heiler)

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Description
Hello ruby-core team.

I lately had a strange error message.

The code was like this (I made a shorter example so that you can reproduce it):

```ruby
class Foo
  def bar
    puts 'This is hello world from method bar().'
  end; alias bar1 bar
  alias bar2 bar
end

foo = Foo.new
foo.bar1
foo.bar2
```

(If you want to copy/paste from another site, here is a link to gist github with the above code):

https://gist.githubusercontent.com/shevegen/7bfb8cce3f191d5ba7372fc5b23924f7/raw/72057e89ae824c2792328d8ab09c364054104add/wrong_alias.rb

Now, I saved this as the file foo.rb and had ruby evaluate/execute this file, and the error I got was this one here:

```
foo.rb:8:in 'class:Foo>': undefined local variable or method `bar' for Foo:Class (NameError)
```

However had, as you can see above, the name "ailas" was a typo.

I meant to write "alias". This is now another small typo that I did; in the past I also wrote "def initialize", thankfully we now have the did-you-mean-it gem.

So I was trying to see if this gem might help here as well.

The gem author Yuki Nishijima has given an example:

https://github.com/yuki24/did_you_mean#correcting-an-instance-variable-when-its-incorrectly-typed

So let's try this via:

```ruby
require 'did_you_mean/experimental'
```

(I think I had to do a "gem install did_you_mean", experimental.rb is perhaps not part of default ruby. But this is an aside, after the gem install, the above require statement worked.)

The error still is the same, though:
As you can see, if you replace "ailas" with "alias" then the error will go away. But I was thinking that ruby tells me the wrong error message here, in this case. bar() actually already exists, but what does not exist is the word "ailas", only "alias". I assume that it may not be very trivial to make this available for error reporting BUT it also is a typo that I have made, and so I thought I would report it.

I would feel that either ruby by default should catch this error, or perhaps make a better evaluation of the line (an error message such as "mispelled alias" would be nice but I also understand that this feature is possibly unwanted to enable by default, since in all those cases where no typo is in code, it would be wasted CPU time) or possibly with the experimental feature of the did_you_mean gem.

I do not know how simple it would be to implement it or if this has been reported already, but in the event that it has already been reported, it may be better to report it more than once rather than zero times.

Thanks.

PS: I filed this under features, because it probably is not a bug in the sense that the behaviour would be wrong; I just consider the error reporting in this context not perfect either, so I proposed it as a new feature or more accurately a feature change.

History
#1 - 09/07/2016 08:57 AM - matz (Yukihiro Matsumoto)
- Status changed from Open to Rejected

Unfortunately aillas bar2 bar is totally valid Ruby code. I recommend using syntax highlighting.

Matz.