Ruby master - Feature #14799
Startless range
05/31/2018 07:56 AM - zverok (Victor Shepelev)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Status: Closed</th>
<th>Priority: Normal</th>
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<td>Assignee: matz (Yukihiro Matsumoto)</td>
<td>Target version:</td>
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**Description**

On introduction of endless range at #12912, "startless range" was discussed this way:

- **sowieso (So Wieso):** Not having the opposite (..5 and ..-2) feels like this is rather a hack than a thoroughly planned feature.
- **duerst (Martin Dürst):** I don't understand the need for a ..5 Range. The feature is called "endless range". Although mathematically, it's possible to think about startless ranges, they don't work in a program. Maybe some programming languages have ..5 as a shortcut for 0..5, but that's in any way a usual, bounded, range with a start and an end. It's conceptually totally different from 5.., which is a range with a start but no end, an unbound range.

In the context of that ticket (ranges used mostly for slicing arrays) having ..5 was indeed hard to justify, but there are other cases when ..5 being -Infinity..5 is absolutely reasonable:

```ruby
# Celsius degrees
WORK_RANGES = {
  ..-10 => :turn_off,
  -10..0 => :energy_saving,
  0..20 => :main,
  20..35 => :cooling,
  35.. => :turn_off
}
```

In addition, my related proposal #14784 suggests that this kind of ranges could be utilized by more powerful clamp too:

```ruby
updated_at.clamp(..Date.today)
```

**Uncertainty points:**

- Would it be hard to add to parser? I am not sure, I am not very good at it :(.
- Should .. be a thing? I guess not, unless there would be convincing real-life examples, which for me it is hard to think of.

**Related issues:**

| Related to Ruby master - Bug #15745: There is no symmetry in the beginless ra... | Closed |

**Associated revisions**

Revision 67422 - 04/03/2019 08:11 AM - mame (Yusuke Endoh)
Introduce beginless range [Feature#14799]
No strong opinion on this. However let me leave one question: how should Range#each work for this kind of ranges?

Most probably it should not (the same as Enumerable#reverse_each or last(5) doesn't have a sense for already implemented endless ranges), just raise.

Sounds reasonable, except it seems endless range does not raise for #reverse_each :)
• Ruby doesn't seem to like N..M ranges where M < N ((5..1).each {|x| puts x}) simply prints 5..1 in ruby 2.5

Intuitively, counting down like that seems like a pretty common use case, but I cannot actually recall ever needing it, and it could also be simulated with a forward-counting range and just multiplying the values with -1 before using them, which shouldn't really have any considerable impact on speed.

EDIT: Overriding #each to raise an exception and only allowing #reverse_each with startless ranges might make them somewhat useful.

#8 - 06/14/2018 02:34 PM - znz (Kazuhiro NISHIYAMA)

I think version guard of ruby/spec is one of usages.

For example:

```ruby
ruby_version_is """" do
  # ...
end
```

#9 - 06/14/2018 03:16 PM - Eregon (Benoit Daloze)

znz (Kazuhiro NISHIYAMA) wrote:

I think version guard of ruby/spec is one of usages.

For example:

```ruby
ruby_version_is """" do
  # ...
end
```

Right, this would be a nice way to express version ranges like

```ruby
ruby_version_is ...2.6" do
  # ...
end
```
```ruby
ruby_version_is 2.4... do
  # ...
end
```

However for the case of ruby/spec, we'll have to wait until 2.5 is out of life to actually use those, as the syntax does not work on 2.5 and earlier.

#10 - 06/14/2018 10:30 PM - mame (Yusuke Endoh)

I agree that it is a good use case.

But notice that we will not be able to write ruby_version_is ..."2.6" do because it parses as (ruby_version_is..."2.6") do.

We need to write parentheses: ruby_version_is(..."2.6") do.

#11 - 06/15/2018 05:14 PM - Eregon (Benoit Daloze)

mame (Yusuke Endoh) Ah, that is quite unfortunate (it does not look so nice with the parens), but thank you for mentioning the caveat.

I guess much like Range literals in general, it's often needed to have parens around them.

#12 - 06/21/2018 09:02 AM - knu (Akinori MUSHA)

Let me point out that with this patch applied, (nil..nil).cover?(1) would become returning true rather than raising an error. Note that nil..nil has been valid for all past versions of ruby.

#13 - 03/11/2019 05:15 AM - matz (Yuukihiro Matsumoto)

I have some concerns, especially ones with syntax rules. Let us try it in the trunk, and see if it works well or not.

Matz.

#14 - 03/11/2019 05:29 AM - nobu (Nobuyoshi Nakada)

BDOT2 and BDOT3 don't seem necessary.

#15 - 04/03/2019 08:16 AM - mame (Yuusuke Endoh)

- Status changed from Assigned to Closed

Committed at r67422. Please give it a try and let me know if you find any issue.
Related to Bug #15745: There is no symmetry in the beginless range and the endless range using `Range#inspect` added

Files

| beginless-range.patch | 3.55 KB | 05/31/2018 | mame (Yusuke Endoh) |