
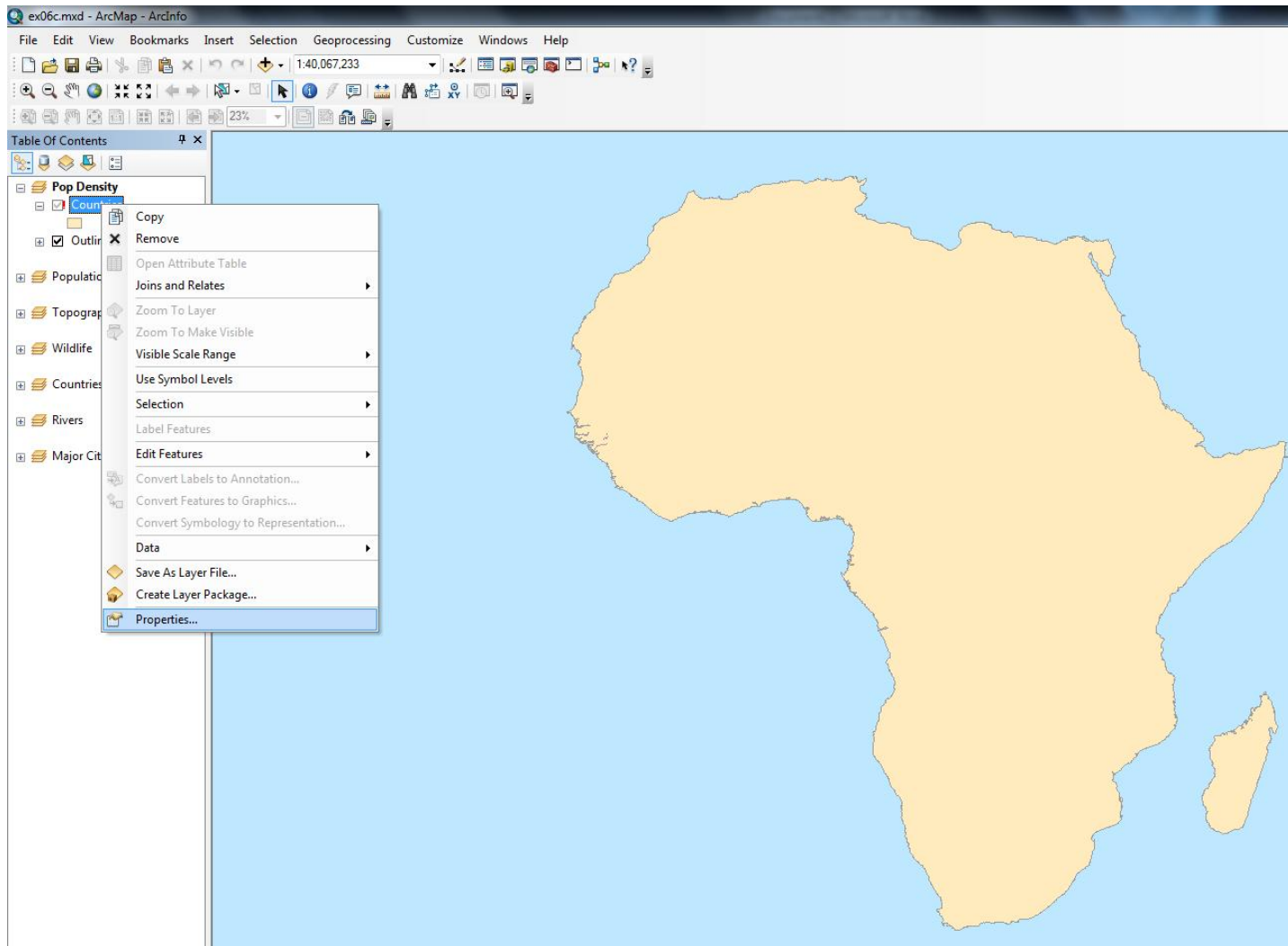


Guidelines for Finding Missing Data Sources

Working in ArcMap, you may come across a layer that has a red exclamation mark next to it, like this ( Countries). This means that ArcMap cannot find the data file associated with this map layer. This often happens when moving file/folder structures between different computers, or when a colleague has shared a map file with you. The following example explains how to rectify this issue.

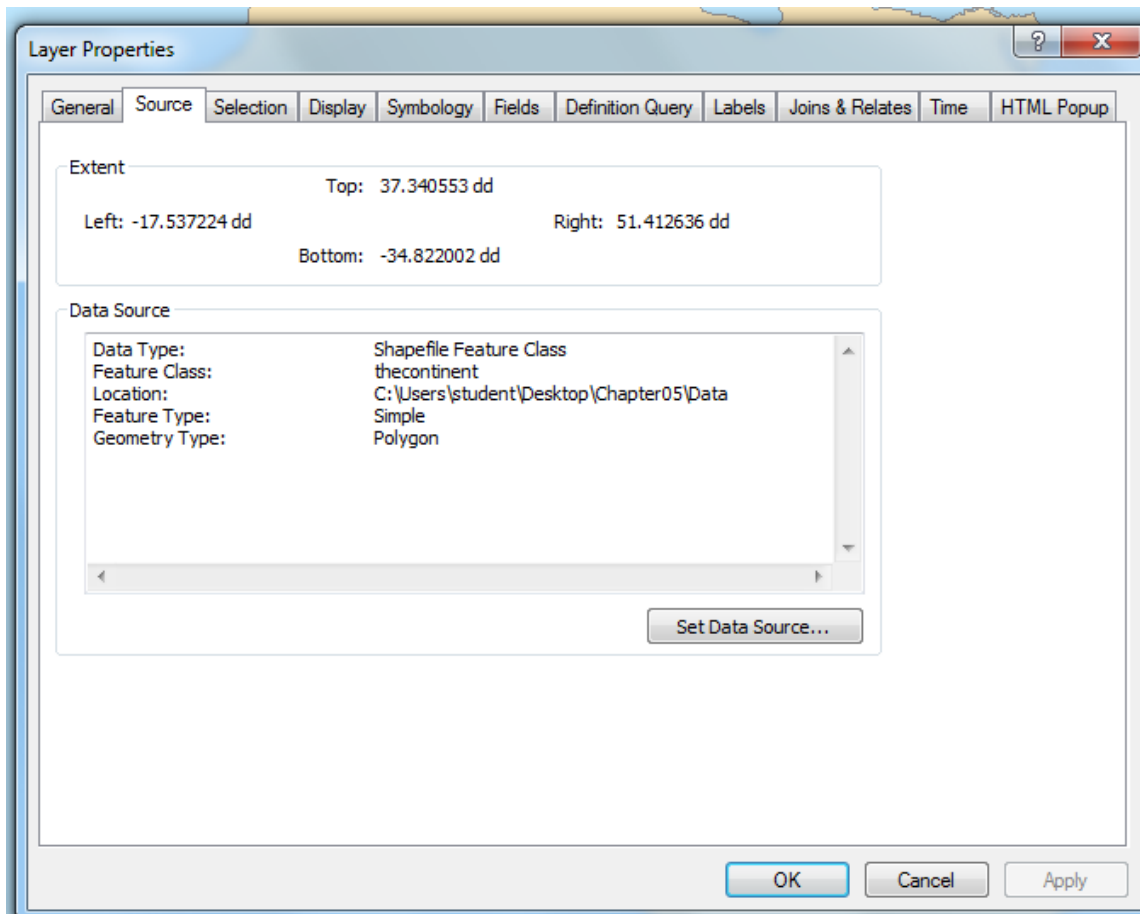
Example:

1) Exercise 6 in the GTK ArcGIS suite has a layer called “Countries”. In this case, we find the dreaded red exclamation mark next to the layer.



2) Let's look at the data source. Right click on the layer and hit Properties...

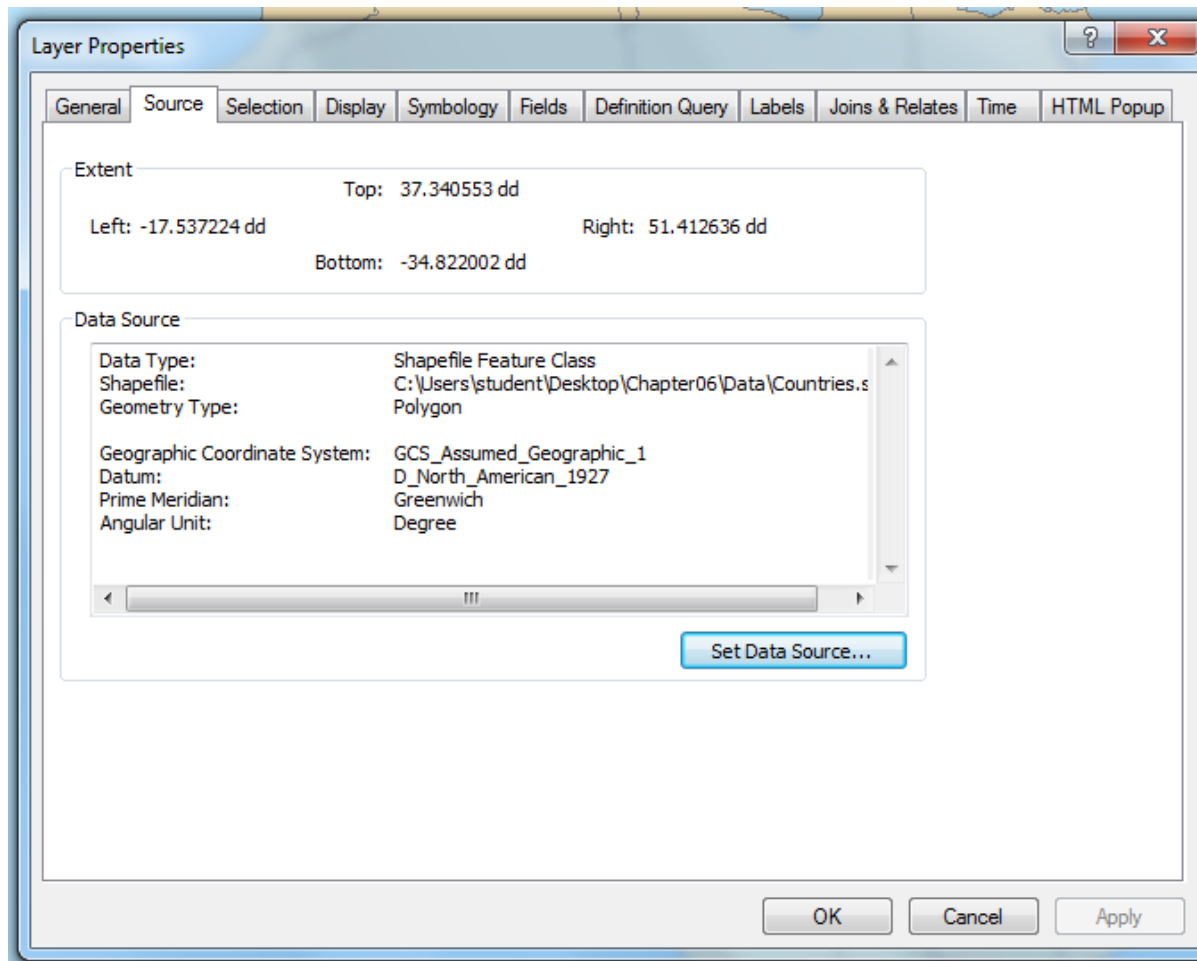
3) Click the Source tab in the Layer Properties. The Data Source box indicates the path location.



4) One of two issues have caused the data to not display: (A) either the path location is wrong, or (B) the path location is correct but the file does not exist in that folder. In this example, the path location is wrong so we need to point ArcMap to the correct path location (...\\Chapter06\\data).

5) Click “Set Data Source...” and navigate to the correct folder, then select the correct data file (in this case, ...\\Chapter06\\Data\\Countries.shp).

IMPORTANT: Note that this requires you know which file is the correct data file. In reality, you may need to work with the colleague who gave you the data files so you are sure you know which layer goes with which data file.



6) Now the layer appears correctly and the red exclamation mark is gone.

