

Topics in Retrospective Simulation

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Part 2: Rao-Blackwellisation for Improved Monte Carlo for
Stochastic Processes

Including work with Alex Beskos, Paul Fearnhead, Krys Latuszynski,
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Plan for presentation

1. Introduction to Rao-Blackwellisation for Monte Carlo
2. Retrospective Rejection Sampling
3. Exact simulation of diffusions
4. Rao-Blackwellised unbiased importance sampling for stochastic processes

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The Rao-Blackwell Theorem

If $\hat{\theta}$ is some estimator of θ , then $\mathbf{E}(\hat{\theta}|S)$ for any sufficient statistic S is at least as good (in the sense of mean square error).

S being sufficient is required only to ensure $\mathbf{E}(\hat{\theta}|S)$ is a function of the data alone and not the unknown parameter θ .

Rao-Blackwell for Markov chain Monte Carlo (MCMC)

Suppose $\{X_n\}$ is a positive recurrent Markov chain with invariant probability measure π , and we wish to estimate $\pi(f) = \mathbf{E}_\pi(f(X))$. A natural estimator is

$$E_1 = \frac{\sum_{n=1}^N f(X_n)}{N}.$$

If $f \in L^1(\pi)$ this is a consistent estimator and commonly can be shown to satisfy a central limit theorem.

However suppose we can analytically calculate $g(X_n) = \mathbf{E}(f(X_{n+1})|X_n)$, then by the Rao-Blackwell Theorem,

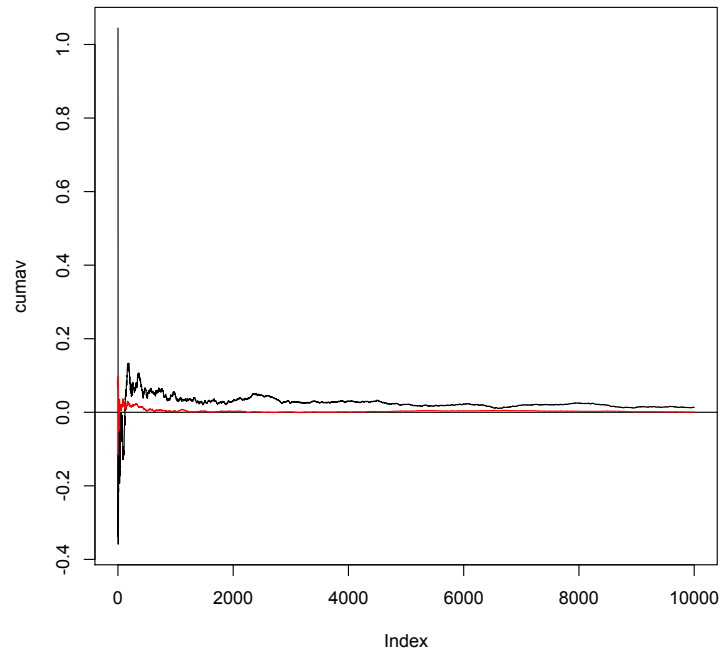
$$\text{Var}(g(X_n)) \leq \text{Var}(f(X_n))$$

suggesting instead we use the estimator:

$$E_2 = \frac{\sum_{n=1}^N g(X_n)}{N}$$

Rao-Blackwellisation for MCMC output

See in particular Robert and Casella (1996).



The ergodic average using E_1 and E_2 . In general, the variance gain can be arbitrarily large, but is usually quite small.

In fact Rao-Blackwellised estimator CAN be worse (Liu Wong King 1994), though there are positive results for reversible MCs (McKeague and Wefelmeyer, 2000)

Later we shall see an example where Rao-Blackwellisation is necessary even for the estimator to exist.

Rao-Blackwellised Kernel density estimates

Consider a d -dimensional Markov chain $(\theta_n^{(1)}, \dots, \theta_n^{(d)})$, $n = 0, 1, 2, \dots$, and let $\pi^{(1)}(\theta^{(1)}|\theta^{(-1)})$ denote the full conditional of the first component given all the others.

Rao-Blackwellised kernel density estimate for $\theta^{(1)}$ is

$$K(\theta^{(1)}) = \frac{\sum_{n=1}^N \pi^{(1)}(\theta^{(1)}|\theta_n^{(-1)})}{N}$$

Robert and Casella (1996)

Note that this is a Rao-Blackwellised estimator assuming we are running a Gibbs sampler which uses $\theta^{(1)}$ as one of its constituent steps.

However we can still use this estimator for ANY Markov chain with invariant distribution π .

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Rejection sampling

Let f be a density of interest, and g be a density from which we can simulate. f/g bounded by K say.

1. **Sample** X from g .
2. **Compute** $p(X) = f(X)/(Kg(X))$.
3. Simulate $U \sim U(0, 1)$.
4. Accept X if $p(X) > U$. Otherwise return to 1.

Blue steps are often unnecessary!

Retrospective rejection sampling

1. Sample $V \sim U(0, 1)$.
2. Identify a function $h(V, X)$ and a set $A(V)$ such that

$$\mathbf{P}_V\{h(V, X) \in A(V)\} = p(X)$$

3. Simulate $h(X, V)$.
4. If $h(X, V) \in A(V)$ the accept. Otherwise return to 1.
5. Fill in missing bits of X from distribution of $X|h(X, V)$ as required.

Simulation of stochastic processes

Suppose that $X : [0, 1] \rightarrow \mathbf{R}^d$ is a stochastic process with associated probability measure \mathbf{P}_0 .

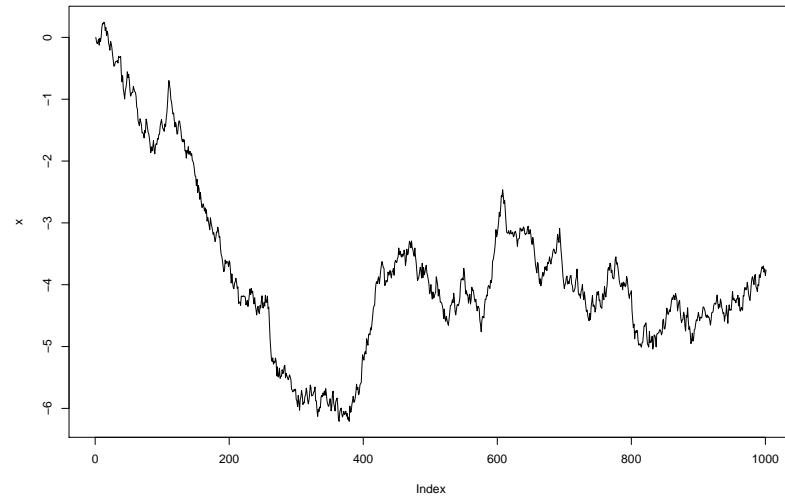
Suppose we are able to simulate from \mathbf{P}_0 .

Suppose that we wish to simulate from a different distribution \mathbf{P} which cannot be directly simulated, but for which we can write:

$$\frac{d\mathbf{P}}{d\mathbf{P}_0}(X) \propto \exp\left\{-r \int_0^1 \phi(X_s) ds\right\} = a(X)$$

for some function ϕ taking values in $[0, 1]$.

This applies to very wide range of stochastic processes, eg [point processes in space and time](#), [diffusions](#), [jump diffusions](#), [processes used in Bayesian non-parametrics](#).



For example, given this trajectory, $a(X)$ describes the [Radon-Nikodym](#) derivative between \mathbf{P} and \mathbf{P}_0 for this particular trajectory.

Rejection for sample paths

Would like to just propose a sample path from \mathbf{P}_0 and use rejection sampling. However

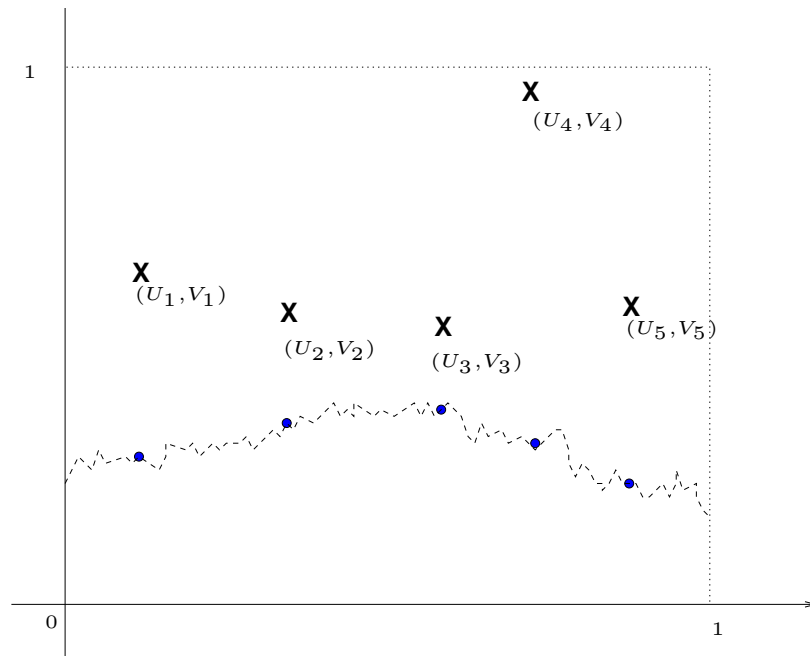
- Just storing all of X could require infinite storage capacity.
- Calculating $\int_0^1 \phi(X_s) ds$ is likely to require infinite computation

We [could approximate](#) in some way, but this seems unsatisfactory, and it would typically be very difficult to quantify the resulting approximation error.

Retrospective rejection simulation

Key observation: $a(x)$ is the probability of a Poisson random variable of parameter $r \int_0^1 \phi(X_s) ds$ taking value 0.

Or ... the probability that a Poisson process of rate r on the unit square has no points on the epi graph $\{(u, v) \in [0, 1]^2; v \leq \phi(u)\}$.



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Simulation of diffusions

Continuous, strong Markov processes described by stochastic differential equation:

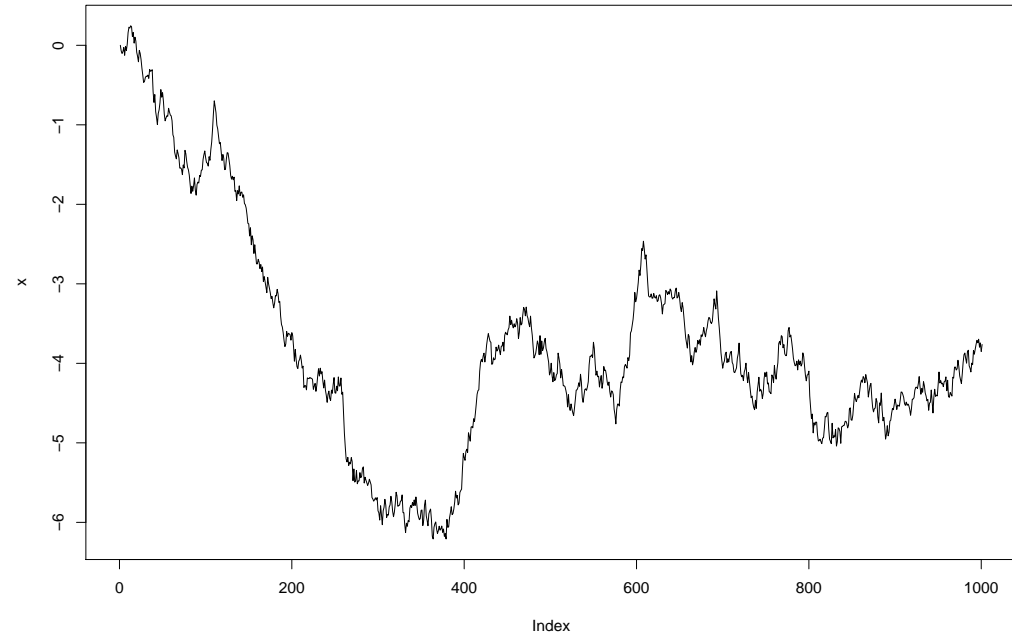
$$dX_t = \alpha(X_t)dt + \sigma(X_t)dB_t$$

where B is standard Brownian motion.

This can be interpreted constructively as

$$X_{t+\epsilon} = X_t + \epsilon\alpha(X_t) + \sigma(X_t)N(0, \epsilon)$$

approximately for ‘small’ ϵ (the **Euler approximation**) written as



Interested in simulating **without discretisation error** and obtaining a realisation of the **whole path** in some sense.

Diffusion densities

Consider simplest case, σ constant and drift α which is bounded with bounded derivative.

$$dX_t = \alpha(X_t)dt + dB_t$$

and let the law of this diffusion on $[0, 1]$ be denoted \mathbf{P} , with \mathbf{W} being that of the Brownian motion (Wiener measure) .

Then under very weak regularity conditions

$$\frac{d\mathbf{P}}{d\mathbf{W}}(X) = G(X)$$

where G is given by the **Cameron-Martin-Girsanov** formula:

$$\log G(X) = \int_0^1 (\alpha(X_s)dX_s - \alpha^2(X_s)/2) ds$$

Towards a simulation algorithm: simplifying G

By a suitable rearrangement we can rewrite

$$\frac{d\mathbf{P}}{d\mathbf{W}}(X) = G(X) \propto \exp \left\{ A(X_1) - r \int_0^1 \phi(X_s) ds \right\} := a(X)$$

where ϕ always always takes values in the interval $[0, 1]$.

This is *almost* in the exponential form required for the Poisson process idea above.

So we consider **biased Brownian motion** proposals for rejection sampling:

$$\mathbf{P}_0(X_1 \in dx) \propto \exp\{A(x) - x^2/2\} dx \quad (*)$$

with $\mathbf{X}|X_1 \sim$ Brownian bridge, so that

$$\frac{d\mathbf{P}}{d\mathbf{P}_0} \propto \exp\left\{-r \int_{s=0}^1 \phi(X_s) ds\right\}.$$

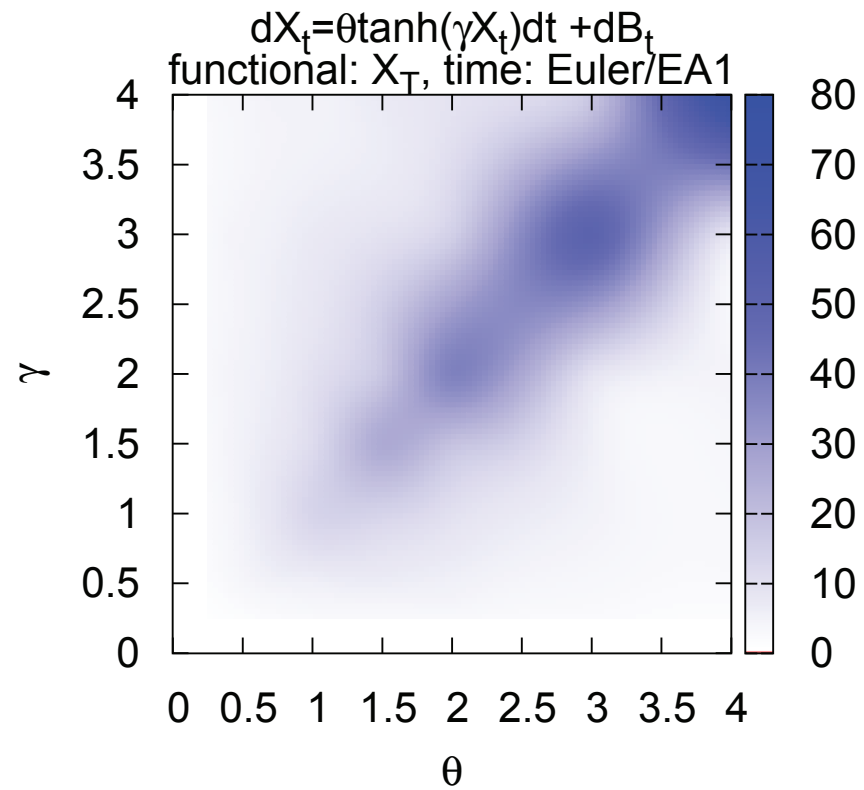
Let Φ be a Poisson process of rate r on $\{0 \leq y \leq \phi(X_s), 0 \leq s \leq 1\}$. Then

$$\mathbf{P}\left(\Phi \text{ is the empty configuration} = \exp\left\{-r \int_0^1 \phi(X_s) ds\right\}\right).$$

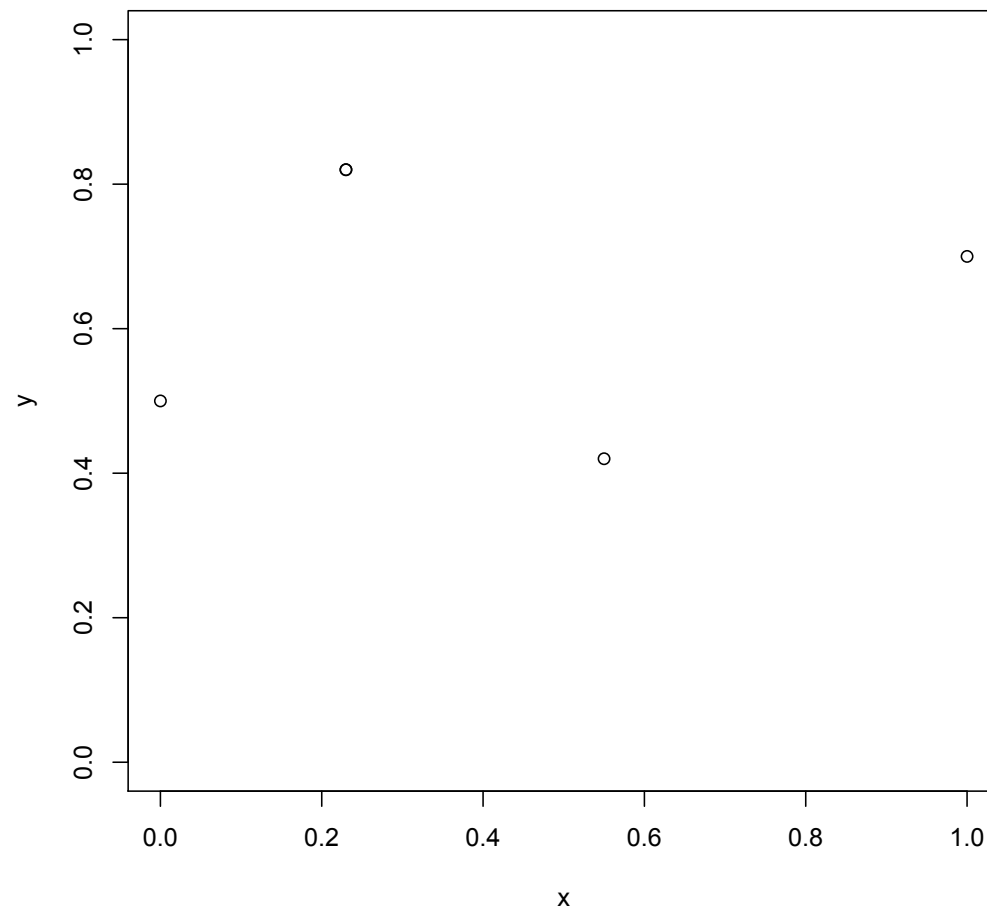
The basic diffusion Exact Algorithm (EA1)

1. Set $B_0 = 0$. Simulate B_1 from (*)
2. Generate Poisson process of rate r on $[0, 1] \times [0, 1]$: $\Phi = \{(U_1, V_1), \dots, (U_n, V_n)\}$
3. For each U_i , draw B_{U_i} from its appropriate Brownian bridge probabilities.
4. If $\phi(B_{U_i}) > V_i$ for **ANY** i , erase skeleton and go to (1).
5. Output the currently stored skeleton $\{(0, B_0), (1, B_1), (U_i, B_{U_i}), 1 \leq i \leq n\}$.

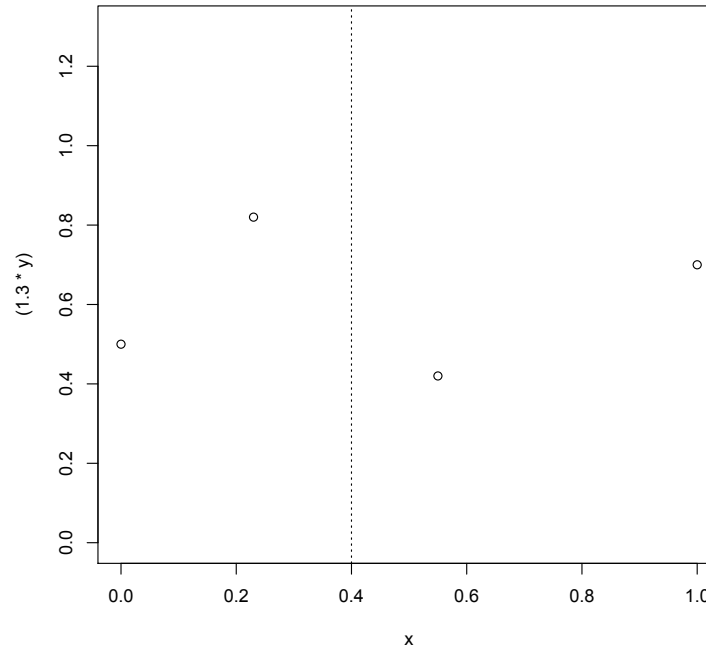
Part of a simulation study



The algorithm output



How can we use the output for Monte Carlo?



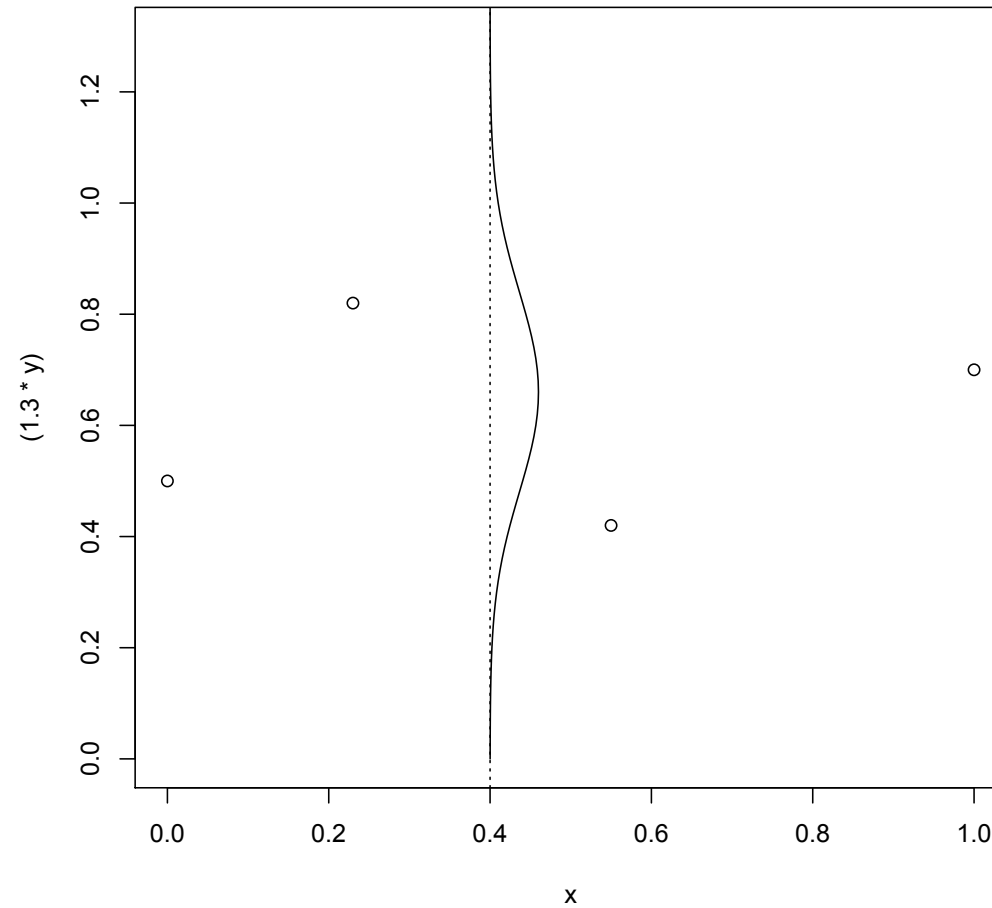
This is the skeleton $S(X)$, a finite and random dimensional collection of times together with the value of X at those times:

$$\{U_0 = 0, U_1, \dots, U_{\kappa+1} = 1; X_0, X_{U_1}, \dots, X_{U_\kappa}, X_1\}$$

We can discard the Poisson process heights, V_1, \dots, V_κ .

Distribution of X_t not contained in S

Suppose we wish to estimate $\mathbf{E}(X_t^3)$.



Random Sufficiency

$$dX_t = \alpha(X_t)dt + dB_t$$

Let \tilde{S} be a proposed skeleton

$$\{U_0 = 0, U_1, \dots, U_{\kappa+1} = 1; X_0, X_{U_1}, \dots, X_{U_\kappa}, X_1\}$$

Set D denote the accept reject decision:

$$D = \prod_{i=1}^{\kappa} \mathbf{1}_{\phi(X_{U_i}) \leq V_i} .$$

Then X and D are independent conditional on \tilde{S} , so that the distribution of $X|\tilde{S}$ is independent of whether the proposal is accepted.

Since the distribution of $X|X_1$ under the proposal measure is independent of α , it follows that S acts as a random sufficient statistic for α in the sense that the distribution of $X|S$ does not depend on α .

In fact $X|S$ can be constructed as a collection of $\kappa + 1$ Brownian bridges linking successive points in S .

Estimation

Suppose we have N skeletons, S_1, \dots, S_N . Conditional on S , $X_{0.4} \sim N(a(S), b(S))$ for some a, b according to the appropriate Brownian bridge probabilities for the bridge bridging time 0.4. So independent exact draws from $X_{0.4}$ can be obtained by simulating

$$X_i \sim N(a(S_i), b(S_i)), \quad 1 \leq i \leq N .$$

$$E_1 = \frac{\sum_{n=1}^N X_i^3}{N} .$$

But $\mathbf{E}(X^3|S)$ ($= c(S)$ say) is analytically tractable, so that the **Rao-Blackwellised estimator**

$$E_2 = \frac{\sum_{n=1}^N c(S_i)}{N} .$$

will have smaller variance.

How to do with state-dependent volatility?

$$dX_t = \sigma(X_t)dB_t + b(X_t)dt$$

We can apply the **Lamperti transform**: $Y_t = h(X_t)$ where

$$h(x) = \int_0^x \frac{dz}{\sigma(z)}$$

By Itô's formula we get

$$dY_t = dB_t + \alpha(Y_t)$$

where

$$\alpha(y) = \frac{b(h^{-1}(y))}{\sigma(h^{-1}(y))} - \frac{\sigma'(h^{-1}(y))}{2} .$$

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The Exact Algorithm for multi-dimensional diffusions

Generally simulation and inference for diffusions is performed by [approximating](#) the diffusions by a [discrete-time Markov process](#).

What about multiple-dimensional problems? Now σ is matrix, b a vector etc.

$$dX_t = \sigma(X_t)dB_t + b(X_t)dt$$

Firstly, can we reduce to the constant volatility case as we did on 1-dimension?

In general we cannot do this ...

The multi-dimensional diffusion case

For multi-dimensional diffusions, we can adopt the exact algorithm if:

- The volatility can be transformed to be constant via the [Lamperti transform](#): ie we can find a 1-1 function η satisfying the matrix valued differential equation

$$(\nabla\eta)\sigma = I_d$$

- The drift of the transformed diffusion is the gradient of a potential: $\mu(x) = \nabla A(x)$.

This can be applied to [almost all 1- \$d\$](#) diffusions for which CMG theorem holds, but [only certain classes of \$d\$ -dimensional](#) ones.

Why?

The exact Algorithm is a [Rejection Sampler](#) based on proposing paths from a [drift-less](#) version of the diffusion (with [same volatility](#)).

The acceptance probability for the path is (for $\sigma(x) = I_d$) proportional to:

$$\begin{aligned} & \exp \left\{ \int_0^T \mu(X_t) dX_t - \frac{1}{2} \int_0^T |\mu(X_t)|^2 dt \right\} \\ & = \exp \left\{ A(X_T) - A(X_0) - \frac{1}{2} \int_0^T (|\mu(X_t)|^2 + \nabla \mu(X_t)) dt \right\}. \end{aligned}$$

Whilst this cannot be evaluated, events with this probability can be simulated.

The condition $\mu(x) = \nabla A(x)$ is required to replace the stochastic integral by a Lebesgue one. It is a **necessary and sufficient** condition for Girsanov's formula to be bounded for bounded sample paths.

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The condition $\sigma(x)$ is constant is so that we can **simulate** from the driftless diffusion.

- Importance sampling seems **doomed** if we cannot sample from an distribution wrt which target is absolutely continuous.

Consider two diffusions with **different** diffusion coefficients, σ_1 and σ_2 , then their laws as **NOT** mutually absolutely continuous ...

even though their finite-dimensional distributions typically are.

Transition Densities

We will denote the **transition density** of the diffusion by

$$p(y|x, h)dy = p(X_{t+h} \in dy | X_t = x)$$

.

It satisfies Kolmogorov's forward equation:

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial t} p(y|x, t) = \mathcal{K}_y p(y|x, t),$$

for some **forward-operator** \mathcal{K}_y which acts on y .

Generally the transition density is **intractable** with the usual exceptions: constant or linear drifts and a few others ...

Avoiding time-discretisation Errors: Why?

Why might time-discretisation error free methods be useful?

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Avoiding time-discretisation Errors: Why?

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- Time-discretisation may tend to use substantially finer discretisations than are necessary: possible computational gains?
- Want methods which are **robust** as $h \rightarrow 0$
- Error is $O(C^{-1/2})$, where C is CPU cost. Alternative approaches have errors that can be e.g. $O(C^{-1/3})$ (though see multigrid work by Giles and others).

Generalising the exact algorithm using importance sampling

Our aim was to try and extend the ability to perform simulation / estimation / inference without time-discretisation approximations to a wider class of diffusions.

The key is to be able to unbiasedly estimate expectations, such as $E(f(X_t))$ or $E(f(X_{t_1}, \dots, X_{t_m}))$.

The approach we have developed can be applied to general [continuous-time Markov processes](#), and is a continuous-time version of [sequential importance sampling](#).

We construct a [signed measure-valued stochastic processes](#) (which is non-Markov) $\{\xi_t, t \geq 0\}$ with

$$E(\xi_t(f)) = E(f(X_t))$$

Unbiased estimation [almost as good as simulation](#) given recent advances in combining importance sampling and simulation algorithms such as MCMC.

Importance Sampling

Importance Sampling (**IS**) is a Monte Carlo integration technique. Consider the integral

$$I = \int f(x)p(x)dx = \int w(x)f(x)q(x)dx,$$

where $p(x)$ and $q(x)$ are densities, $f(x)$ is arbitrary and $p(x) > 0 \Rightarrow q(x) > 0$. Here we are setting $w(x) = p(x)/q(x)$.

We can view this as an **expectation** with respect to $q(x)$. Thus

1. Sample x_i , $i = 1, \dots, N$, iid from $q(x)$;
2. Estimate the integral by the **unbiased, consistent** estimator:

$$\hat{I} = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N w(x_i)f(x_i)$$

Sequential Importance Sampling (SIS)

As this gives an estimate of the expectation of $f(X)$ for arbitrary functions f , we can think of the sample from $q(x)$, and the corresponding weights as giving an approximation to the distribution defined by $p(x)$.

This idea can be extended to [Markov processes](#):

$$p(x_1, \dots, x_n) = p(x_1) \prod_{i=2}^n p(x_i | x_{i-1}).$$

With a proposal process defined by $q(x_1)$ and $q(x_i | x_{i-1})$.

Sequential Importance Sampling (SIS)

To obtain one weighted sample:

1. Simulate $X_1^{(i)}$ from $q(x_1)$; assign a weight $\tilde{w}_1^{(i)} = p(x_1)/q(x_1)$.
2. For $t = 2, \dots, n$; simulate $X_t^{(i)} | x_{t-1}^{(i)}$ from $q(x_t | x_{t-1}^{(i)})$, and set

$$\tilde{w}_t^{(i)} = \tilde{w}_{t-1}^{(i)} \frac{p(x_t^{(i)} | x_{t-1}^{(i)})}{q(x_t^{(i)} | x_{t-1}^{(i)})}.$$

New Approach: CIS

We now derive a continuous-time importance sampling (CIS) procedure for unbiased inference for general continuous-time Markov models.

We will describe the CIS algorithm for generating a single realisation. So at any time t we will have x_t and w_t , realisations of random variables X_t, W_t such that

$$E_p(f(X_t)) = E_q(f(X_t)W_t).$$

The former expectation is wrt to the target diffusion, the latter wrt to CIS procedure.

We will use a proposal process with tractable transition density $q(x|y, t)$ (and forward-operator $\mathcal{K}_x^{(1)}$).

A discrete-time SIS procedure

First consider a discrete-time SIS method aimed at inference at times $h, 2h, 3h, \dots$.

(0) Fix x_0 ; set $w_0 = 1$, and $i = 1$.

(1) Simulate $X_{ih} = x_{ih}$ from $q(x_{ih}|x_{(i-1)h})$.

(2) Set

$$w_i = w_{i-1} \frac{p(x_{ih}|x_{(i-1)h}, h)}{q(x_{ih}|x_{(i-1)h}, h)}$$

(3) Let $i = i + 1$ and goto (1).

Problems: cannot calculate weights, and often the efficiency degenerates as $h \rightarrow 0$ for fixed T .

As $h \rightarrow 0$, where q and p are discretisations of absolutely continuous diffusions, the limit is given by **Girsanov's formula**.

We want it to work in the case where q and p are mutually singular also!

Random weight SIS

It is valid to replace the weight in the SIS procedure by a **random variable** whose expectation is equal to the weight.

A simple way to do this here is to define

$$r(y, x, h) = 1 + \left(\frac{p(y|x, h)}{q(y|x, h)} - 1 \right) \frac{1}{\lambda h},$$

and introduce a **Bernoulli** random variable U_i , with success probability λh .

Then

$$\frac{p(y|x, h)}{q(y|x, h)} = \text{E} \left\{ (1 - U_i) \cdot 1 + U_i r(y, x, h) \right\}.$$

Random weight SIS

Now we can have a [random weight SIS](#) algorithm:

- (0) Fix x_0 ; set $w_0 = 1$, and $i = 1$.
- (1) Simulate $X_{ih} = x_{ih}$ from $q(x_{ih}|x_{(i-1)h})$.
- (2) Simulate U_i . If $U_i = 1$ then set $w_i = w_{i-1}r(x_{ih}, x_{(i-1)h}, h)$, otherwise $w_i = w_{i-1}$.
- (3) Let $i = i + 1$ and [goto \(1\)](#).

This is a less efficient algorithm than the previous one, but it enables us to now use two tricks: [retrospective sampling](#) and [Rao-Blackwellisation](#).

Retrospective Sampling

We only need to update the weights at time-points where $U_i = 1$. At these points we need to simulate $X_{ih}, X_{(i-1)h}$ to calculate the new weights.

If j is the most recent time when $U_j = 1$, then the distribution of X_{ih} is given by $q(x_{ih}|x_{jh}, (i-j)h)$ (assuming time-homogeneity for simplicity).

Given x_{jh} and x_{ih} the conditional distribution of $X_{(i-1)h}$ is

$$q(x_{(i-1)h}|x_{jh}, x_{ih}) = \frac{q(x_{(i-1)h}|x_{jh}, (i-j-1)h)q(x_{ih}|x_{(i-1)h}, h)}{q(x_{ih}|x_{jh}, (i-j)h)}.$$

New SIS algorithm

Using these ideas we get:

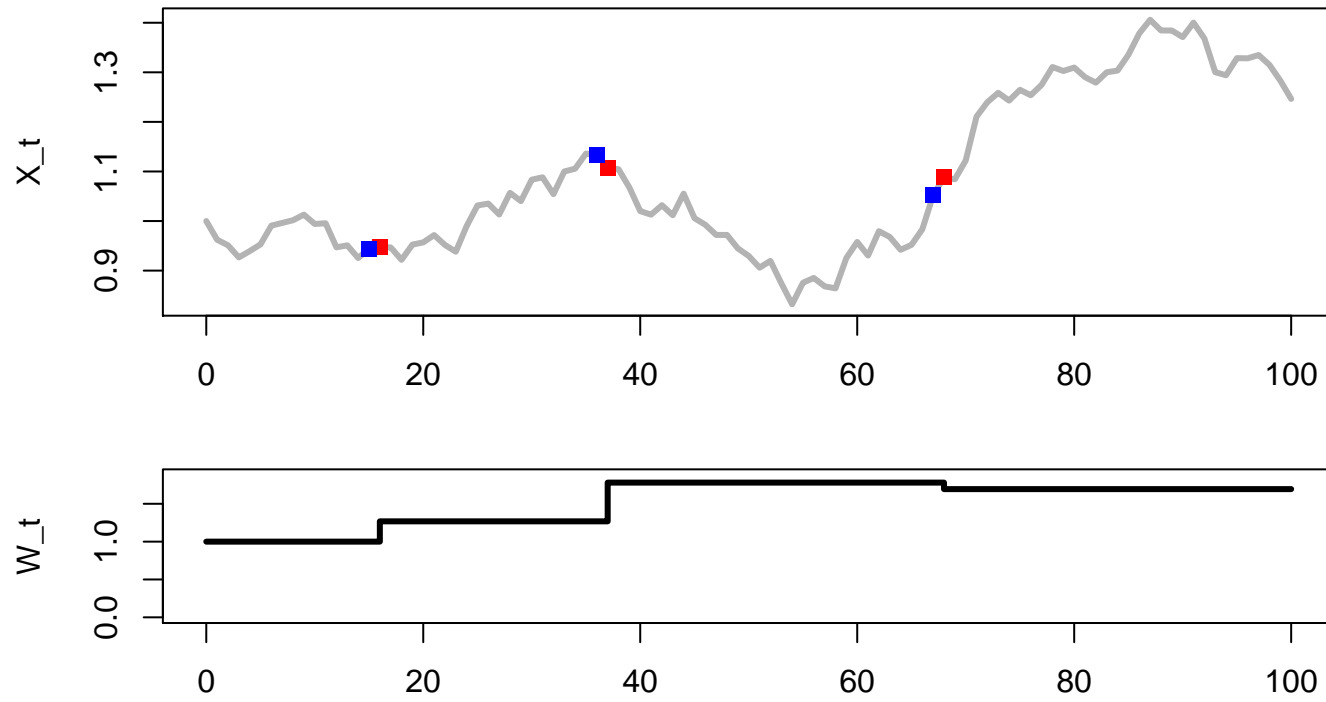
- (0) Fix x_0 ; set $w_0 = 1$, $j = 0$ and $i = 1$.
- (1) Simulate U_i ; if $U_i = 0$ goto (3).
- (2) [$U_i = 1$] Simulate X_{ih} from $q(x_{ih}|x_{jh}, (i-j)h)$ and $X_{(i-1)h}$ from $q(x_{(i-1)h}|x_{jh}, x_{ih})$.
Set

$$w_i = w_j r(x_{ih}, x_{(i-1)h}, h).$$

- (3) Let $i = i + 1$ and goto (1).

If we stop the SIS at a time point t , then X_t can be drawn from $q(x_t|x_{jh}, t - jh)$; and the weight is w_j .

Example



Rao-Blackwellisation

At time ih , the incremental weight depends on x_{ih} and $x_{(i-1)h}$. Rather than simulating both we simulate x_{ih} , and use an expected incremental weight

$$\rho_h(x_{ih}, x_{jh}, (j-i)h) = \mathbb{E} \left(r(x_{ih}, X_{(i-1)h}, h) \mid x_{jh} \right),$$

with expectation with respect to the conditional distribution of $X_{(i-1)h}$ given x_{jh}, x_{ih} under the proposal:

$$\mathbb{E} \left(r(x_{ih}, X_{(i-1)h}, h) \mid x_{jh} \right) = \int r(x_{ih}, x_{(i-1)h}, h) q(x_{(i-1)h} \mid x_{jh}, x_{ih}) dx_{(i-1)h}.$$

New SIS algorithm

Using these ideas we get:

- (0) Fix x_0 ; set $w_0 = 1$, $j = 0$ and $i = 1$.
- (1) Simulate U_i ; if $U_i = 0$ goto (3).
- (2) [$U_i = 1$] Simulate X_{ih} from $q(x_{ih}|x_{jh}, (i - j)h)$ and set

$$w_i = w_j \rho_h(x_{ih}, x_{jh}, (i - j)h).$$

- (3) Let $i = i + 1$ and goto (1).

If we stop the SIS at a time point t , then X_t can be drawn from $q(x_t|x_{jh}, t - jh)$; and the weight is w_j .

Continuous-time SIS

The previous algorithm cannot be implemented as we do not know $p(\cdot|\cdot, h)$. However, if we consider $h \rightarrow 0$ we obtain a **continuous-time** algorithm that can be implemented.

The **Bernoulli process** converges to a **Poisson-process**.

In the limit as $h \rightarrow 0$, if we fix $t = ih$ and $s = jh$ we get

$$\rho(x_t, x_s, t - s) = \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \rho_h(x_t, x_s, t - s) = 1 + \frac{1}{\lambda} \left(\frac{(\mathcal{K}_x - \mathcal{K}_x^{(1)})q(x|x_s, t - s)}{q(x|x_s, t - s)} \right) \Big|_{x=x_t} .$$

CIS Algorithm

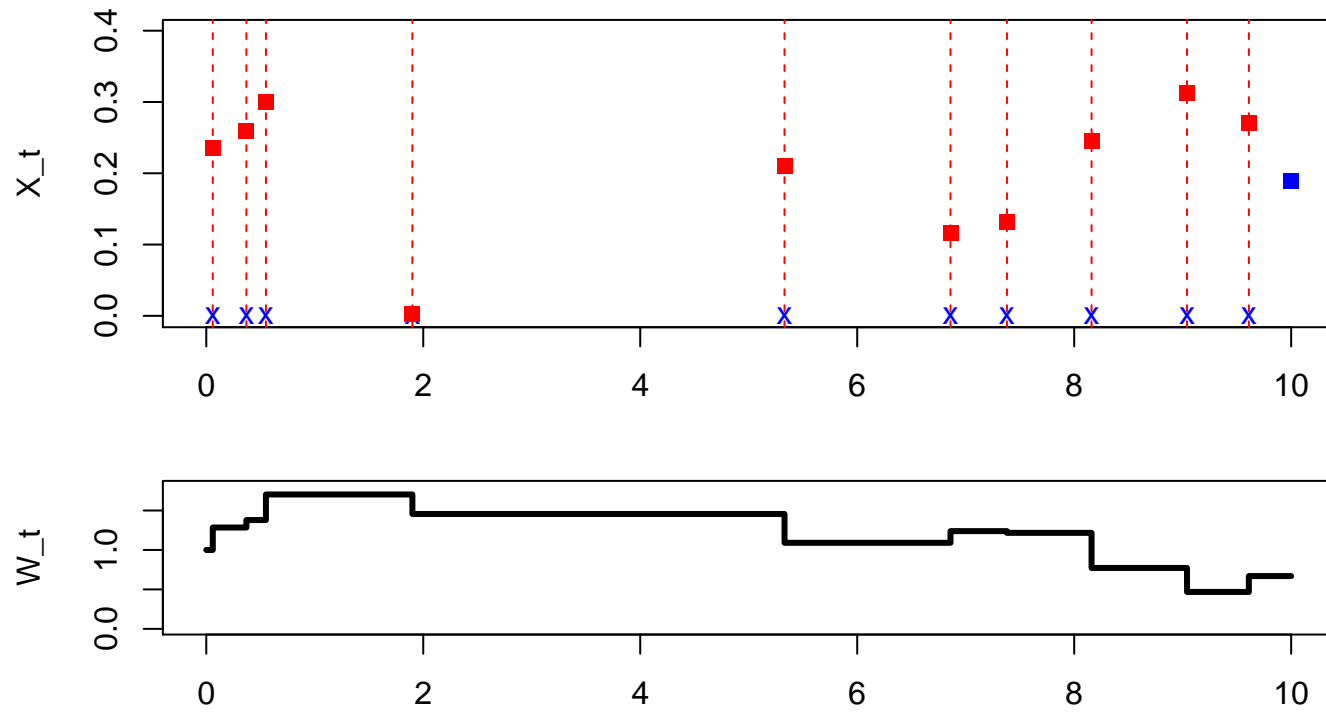
- (0) Fix x_0 ; set $w_0 = 1$ and $s = 0$.
- (1) Simulate the time t of the next event after s in a Poisson process of rate λ .
- (2) Simulate X_t from $q(x_t|x_s, t - s)$; and set

$$w_t = w_s \times \rho(x_t, x_s, t - s).$$

- (3) Goto (1).

If we stop the SIS at a time point T , then X_T can be drawn from $q(x_T|x_s, T - s)$; and the weight is w_j .

Example CIS



CIS for diffusions

The **target** process is

$$dX_t = \mu(X_t)dt + \sigma(X_t)dB_t.$$

- Define an exogenous renewal process $\{\tau_1, \tau_2 \dots\}$ with inter-arrival rate $\lambda = \lambda(t - \tau(t))$.
- Update weights at each renewal according to above formula.
- At each renewal, **update** the importance process:

$$dX_t = b(\tau_i)dt + v(X_{\tau_i})dB_t.$$

Does it work?

Not always! A necessary (and it turns out sufficient) condition for the method to be valid (ie unbiased) is that the weight process $\{w_s; s \geq 0\}$ is a martingale. Then the CIS algorithm provides unbiased estimates of the **diffusion marginal distributions** (and by iterations its FDDs).

In **almost all** cases where the proposal is **not** chosen to have $v(\tau_i) = \sigma(X_{\tau_i})$ then the weight process turns out to **NOT** be in L^1 !

What about the **copycat scheme**? $v(\tau_i) = \sigma(X_{\tau_i}), b(\tau_i) = \mu(X_{\tau_i})$

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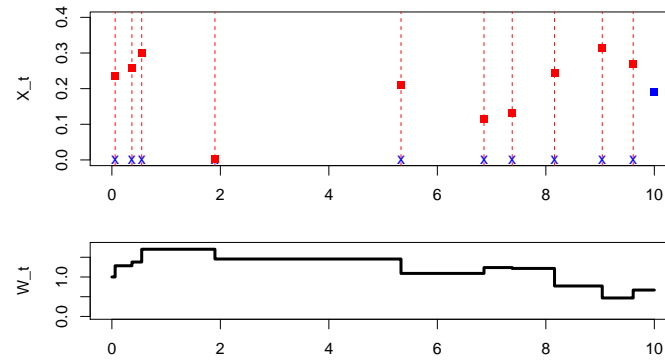
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Theorem:

1. If σ and μ are globally Lipschitz, and σ is bounded away from 0, then the copycat scheme is **valid**.
2. If σ and μ are also bounded above, then for all $p > 1$, there exists $\epsilon > 0$ such that choosing $\lambda(u) \propto u^{-1+\epsilon}$ ensures that $\{w_s, s \geq 0\}$ is an L^p martingale.



$$w_T = \prod_{i=1}^{N_T} \rho_i$$

where

$$\rho_i = 1 + \frac{1}{\lambda} \left(\frac{(\mathcal{K}_x - \mathcal{K}_x^{(1)})q(x|x_s, t-s)}{q(x|x_s, t-s)} \right) \Big|_{x=x_t} .$$

Comments and Extensions

For [general diffusions care is needed](#) to ensure these conditions are satisfied – we have results which give rules for implementing the procedure in these cases.

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Dealing with the [negative weights](#) is an important issue.

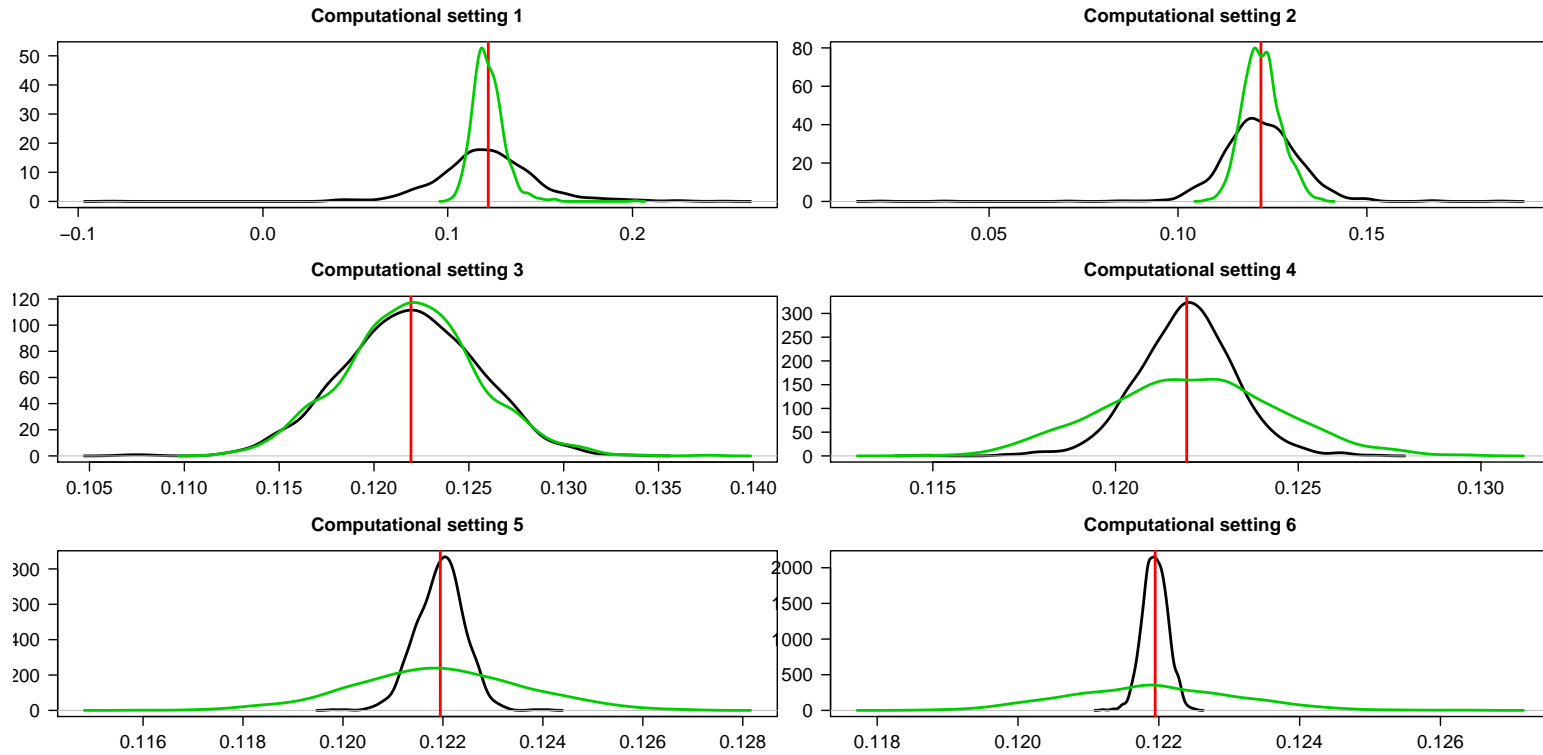
Example: CIR Diffusion

We consider estimating the transition density for a 2-d CIR model:

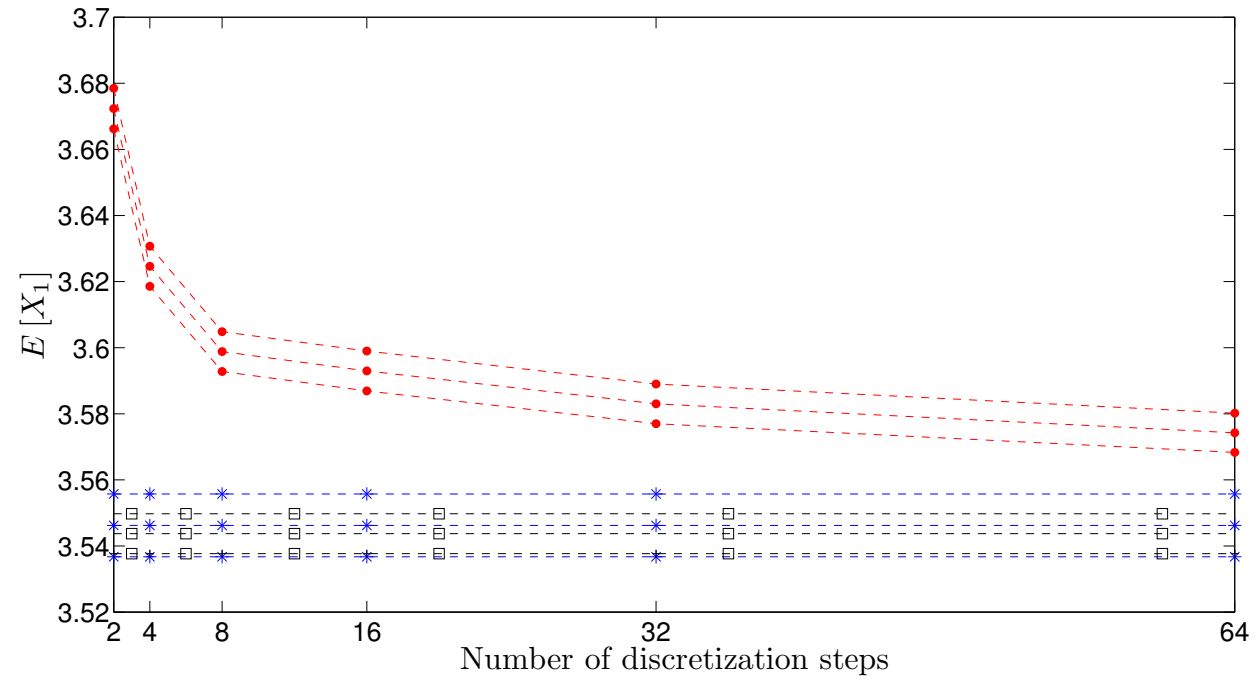
$$\begin{bmatrix} dX_t^{(1)} \\ dX_t^{(2)} \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} -\rho_1(X_t^{(1)} - \mu_1) \\ -\rho_2(X_t^{(2)} - \mu_2) \end{bmatrix} dt + \begin{bmatrix} \sigma_1 \sqrt{X_t^{(1)}} & 0 \\ \rho\sigma_2 \sqrt{X_t^{(2)}} & \sigma_2 \sqrt{(1 - \rho^2)X_t^{(2)}} \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} dB_t^{(1)} \\ dB_t^{(2)} \end{bmatrix}$$

We compare the CIS with a time-discretisation approach based on the ideas in [Durham and Gallant \(2002\)](#), for varying CPU cost.

Example: CIR Diffusion



Example: Jump diffusions



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Theory established for diffusions, and very recently for jump diffusions