stern Multi-pod Kubernetes logs

CONCEPTS

stern tails many pods and containers at once, one colour per pod, and picks up new or restarted pods automatically. The query is a regular expression on the pod name, not a glob.

Pod query regex or kind/name
↓ -n -l --node
Pods namespaces, labels
↓ -c -E --container-state
Containers init, ephemeral
↓ -i -e --since
Log lines merged stream
↓ -o --template
Output colour, JSON, custom

Default is all pods you can see in the current namespace and context; --since defaults to 48h and --tail to all lines, so busy pods print a lot at start.

SELECTING PODS

stern *<query>*
Tail pods whose name matches regex

stern .
Tail every pod in the namespace

stern *<kind>*/*<name>*
Exact resource, e.g. deployment/nginx

-n *<ns>* **/ --namespace** *<ns>*
Namespace, repeat or comma-separate

-A / --all-namespaces
Every namespace

-l *<selector>* **/ --selector**
Filter by label selector

--field-selector *<expr>*
Filter by field, e.g. spec.nodeName=<node>

--exclude-pod *<regex>*
Skip pods matching regex

CONTAINERS

-c *<regex>* **/ --container**
Only containers matching regex

-E *<regex>* **/ --exclude-container**
Skip containers, e.g. istio-proxy

CONTAINERS (cont.)

--container-state *<state>*
running, waiting, terminated or all

--init-containers=false
Leave out init containers

TIME AND VOLUME

--tail *<n>*
Last n lines per container

-s *<dur>* **/ --since** *<dur>*
Logs newer than e.g. 15m or 2h

--no-follow
Print and exit, do not stream

-t / --timestamps
Prefix timestamps

FILTERING LINES

-i *<regex>* **/ --include**
Show only matching lines

-e *<regex>* **/ --exclude**
Hide matching lines

-H *<regex>* **/ --highlight**
Highlight matches, keep all lines

OUTPUT AND COLOUR

-o raw
Message text only, no prefix

-o json
One JSON object per line

--template '*<go-template>***'**
Custom line format

--color auto|always|never
Force or disable colour

-d / --diff-container
Separate colour per container

CLUSTER AND CONFIG

--context *<name>*
Use another kubeconfig context

--kubeconfig *<path>*
Use another kubeconfig file

--config *<path>*
Config file, default ~/.config/stern/config.yaml