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Characterizing the Fermi-LAT high-latitude sky with simulation-based inference

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The GeV gamma-ray sky, as observed by the Fermi Large Area Telescope (Fermi LAT), harbours a plethora of localised point-like sources. At high latitudes ($|b| > 30^\circ$), most of these sources are of extragalactic origin. The source-count distribution as a function of their flux, dN/dS , is a well-established quantity to summarise this population. We employ sequential simulation-based inference using the truncated marginal neural ratio estimation (TMNRE) algorithm on 15 years of Fermi LAT data to infer the dN/dS distribution between 1 and 10 GeV in this part of the sky. While our approach allows us to cross-validate existing results in the literature, we demonstrate that we can go further than mere parameter inference. We derive a source catalogue of detected sources at high latitudes in terms of position and flux obtained from a self-consistently determined detection threshold based on the LAT's instrument response functions and utilised gamma-ray background models.

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