

Shakespeare & Nature

Did Shakespeare witness the **1572 STELLA NOVA?**

The supernova, spotted by Danish astronomer **Tycho Brahe**, blazed in the constellation Cassiopeia and is argued to be the “westward star” in Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*.

The red circle visible in this WISE image is the remnant of SN 1572

At least **five** of Shakespeare’s plays contain the word “**comet**”



The Taming of the Shrew



1 *Henry IV*



1 *Henry VI*



Julius Caesar



Pericles, Prince of Tyre

Shakespeare alludes to the **Copernican theory of heliocentrism** in Hamlet’s love letter to Ophelia

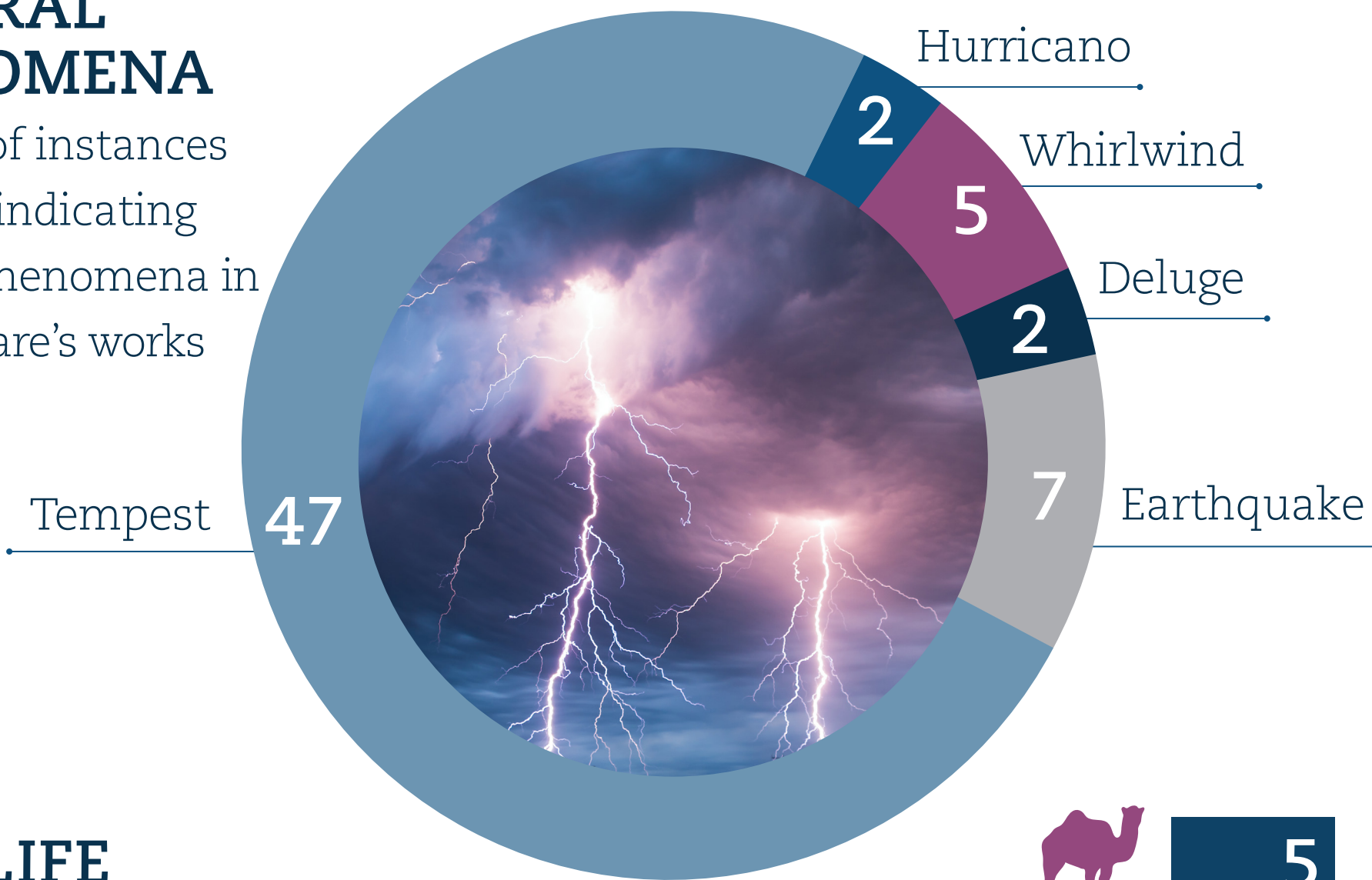
“Doubt thou the stars are fire,
Doubt that the sun doth move,
Doubt truth to be a liar,
But never doubt I love.”

—*Hamlet*, 2.2.115-8



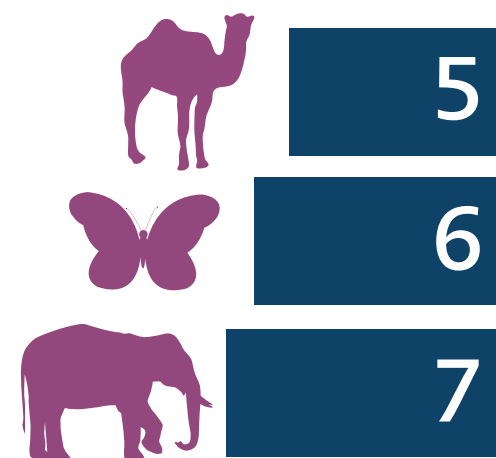
NATURAL PHENOMENA

Number of instances of nouns indicating natural phenomena in Shakespeare’s works



WILDLIFE

Number of instances of animal nouns in Shakespeare’s works



IN HIS PLAYS AND POEMS, Shakespeare **names or alludes to**

at least **63** different kinds **OF BIRDS**

