



Hello - The hot news this month is a [great article](#) in our local newspaper about how the dragon book came to be. And the [dragon store](#) has great gifts for the holidays. And now enjoy tidbits about.....

[Northwest Beaches: The Lowly Barnacle](#)
[Dragons: The Pearl of Great Wisdom](#)
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Northwest Beaches : The Lowly Barnacle

As we head into winter here in the Pacific Northwest you might notice that the low tides aren't so low in the daytime anymore. The really low tides happen at night during the winter months (we'll talk about night time visits to the beach in a future newsletter). But now let's focus on the animals that are higher up on the beach, e.g. the [lowly barnacle](#). You notice them as their shells crunch underfoot when you're beachcombing or if you step on them barefoot. Ouch!

Barnacles are adapted to spending a lot of time out of the water, inner shells [closed up tight](#). But when the tide comes in and the water washes over them you can watch them feed and hear the clickety-clack of their shells opening and closing.

The cool thing about barnacles is that as they open and close their shells underwater they are actually standing on their heads and bringing food to their mouths with



Yvonne Palka

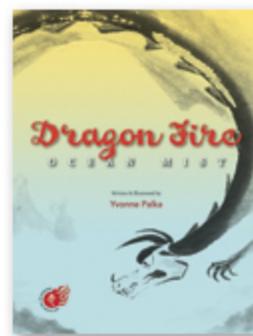
Yvonne is the award-winning sumi-e artist who wrote and illustrated *Dragon Fire, Ocean Mist*. A retired college professor, grandmother, biologist and naturalist, she is passionate about introducing children and adults to the wonders of the natural world.

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their feet! Here's how it happens. When teenage barnacles (in the form of larvae swimming in the water) are ready to become adults and settle down, they drift around until they find a bare patch of rock. Then they land on it head first! They begin to secrete and build their hard shells, all the time waving their legs and feet in the air to make water currents. The currents bring food in the form of plankton in to their mouths. Imagine getting dinner with your feet!

"Dragon Fire offers a delightful intertwining of imagination and love of our natural world as well as a charmed view of one of Washington state's wildest and most serene places. Great for encouraging creative voyages with the young readers in your life, and for fostering young environmentalists as well."

*-Gretchen Russell, Teacher and Librarian
, Gig Harbor, WA*



Dragon Fire Ocean Mist

Written & Illustrated by
Yvonne Palka

[BUY NOW](#)

Also check out the new gift items on the store page - there are note cards of the illustrations, calendars, t-shirts, mugs and more!

Dragons :The Pearl of Great Wisdom

In the picture to the right you can see a lovely Chinese dragon statue that a friend gave me. The ball the dragon is holding is really a great pearl - the Pearl of Great Wisdom. It is the dragon's most coveted treasure. The pearl is said to contain the dragon's immense wisdom and knowledge - perhaps representing the inner great wisdom in us as well. The pearl also represents the "yin" or feminine energy and the dragon the "yang" or masculine energy, thus this statue represents the perfectly balanced yin and yang forces in the universe. It is said that the pearl will multiply whatever it touches and is associated with wealth, good luck and prosperity. May all your dragons have pearls!



Bronze Chinese dragon holding the Pearl of Great Wisdom

AsianArt : SchoolVisits Painting with Water!

In the photograph to the right you see a boy doing a sumi-e painting. But he's not doing it with ink - he's doing it with water! The trick is in the paper. He's using what's called "Vanishing Paper" which I've purchased at an art supply store. When the paper gets wet it turns black and then as it dries the image disappears. You can mount the paper on foam core (preferred) or corrugated cardboard (doesn't last as long). Any kind of brush will work - just make sure you are using clean water. Sometimes you find these

boards marketed as "Zen Boards" since you can't be attached to your image! I use these boards a lot when I [visit schools](#) so I can give the children a sense of what it is like to do a sumi painting in a brief amount of time (and no cleanup!)



Sumi-e painting with Water



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