

Firebrand!

from Yvonne Palka, author of *Dragon Fire Ocean Mist*



Welcome to winter! The dragons have travelled to Minnesota for the winter and have been seen at the [local Barnes and Noble](#)! Also check them out at the [Reading Minnesota blog](#).

[Northwest Beaches: Christmas Anemones](#)

[Dragons: Ice Dragons](#)

[Asian Art: Fine Art Prints Now Available of Dragon Art](#)

Northwest Beaches: Christmas Anemones.

Clearly, given the holiday season, I have to write about a lovely sea anemone found at very low tides called the [Christmas or painted anemone](#). Sea anemones are often called "flowers of the sea" because they resemble lovely flowers when they are open and their tentacles spread out. They come in many colors and sizes but the Christmas anemone is red and green (see photo at right). Usually when we find anemones on the beach they are just squishy, closed up lumps. But when the tide comes in they open out their tentacles and look like flowers as they begin feeding. They have small stinging cells in their tentacles called nematocysts with which they can sting prey - plankton, small fish, snails, crabs, etc and then use their tentacles to bring the food to their mouth in the center. (But don't worry - they won't sting you). Christmas anemones will grow up to 10" long and 10" wide and can live 60-80 years! I'm always surprised and delighted to learn about such different animals that live as long as we do - it gives me new respect for the creatures with whom we share the planet.



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.

[VISIT YVONNE'S BLOG](#)

"We bought your book last night at Barnes and Noble. We've been struggling with finding the right style of book that our son enjoys - he's a

good reader but has put off reading lately because he didn't like anything. Well, after 50 pages last night I had to force him to turn out his light. When I asked how the book was, he said, "Mom, It's the best book ever! And it's about dragons!!" Laura W., 4th grade mom, Maple Grove, MN.

Dragons: Ice Dragons.

The snow and ice are here in Minnesota. And so our thoughts turn to ice dragons - those frosty, snowy white creatures who thrive in the icy, cold weather and fly on the great storm clouds coming down from the arctic. Some folks claim that winter comes because the ice dragons are flying south from the arctic bringing the weather with them.

But, surprisingly, few stories about ice dragons exist. My research turned up only a few recent stories. ***The Ice Dragon*** by George RR Martin (2007)- a lovely book for 7-12 yr olds about a girl in the far north who befriends an ice dragon and, in doing so, learns the meaning of love. Another is a charming story by E. Nesbit called "The Ice Dragon" found in her ***The Book of Dragons***. That's where I learned that the North Pole is actually an extremely tall pole of crystalline ice with an ice dragon sleeping around its base! Both of these books are available from Amazon. If any of you know of legends, folktales or other stories about ice dragons I'd love it if you would send them to me at yvonne@nwdragons.com

Asian Art: Fine Art Prints of Dragon Art

- The [art gallery](#) where you can order giclee (fine art) prints of some of the illustrations in Dragon Fire, Ocean Mist is now live and operational! In addition there are prints of some of my other sumi-e paintings of Northwest birds and animals.
- And of course if you would like note cards, calendars, mugs, t-shirts, etc. with dragon pictures do check in at the [Dragonfires Cafe Press store](#).
- And finally there is a great art quality t-shirt with the dragon battle scene available from a cool new internet t-shirt shop called [Eddy's](#) on Whidbey Island.
- And of course you can access all of these great holiday gifts at the [store at nwdragons.com](#)!



Dragon Fire Ocean Mist

Written & Illustrated
by
Yvonne Palka

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Kids painting with water on vanishing image paper at Barnes and Noble author/artist visits



Here's the Christmas anemone all decked out in red and green! Photo by MJ Adams, WSU Beachwatchers.



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available for the
holidays!



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