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# Trip to tackle PNG's mysterious dangers

By **MICHAEL STEDMAN**

THE imagination runs wild considering all the pitfalls that could come with a kayaking trip in a remote and hostile country.

But Hobart teacher Andrew Hughes has chosen to block thoughts of doom and disaster from his mind as he prepares for a 4000km paddle around Papua New Guinea in March.

"The first thing most people say is 'you are going to get speared' or 'you are going to get eaten by a crocodile' because that is the concept that people have of PNG and its people," he said.

"But it is so far off the mark from all the research I have done. If I can dispel those myths, it would be a valuable outcome in itself."

Mr Hughes' trip is equal parts personal adventure and education.

He will hitch a ride 800km up the Fly River on a mining barge before paddling back down to the coast and around via Port Moresby to the northern border with Irian Jaya.

The entire journey will be documented and uploaded to a website designed to be used as a teaching resource in the classroom.

Mr Hughes teaches kindergarten to Grade 4 at Campbell Street Primary.

Last year he spent six months paddling 4800km from Hobart to Cape York in far north Queensland.

Unlike the recent non-stop attempts to cross the treacherous Tasman Sea to New Zealand, Mr Hughes will have the relative luxury of pitching a tent on the coast each night.

He will post regular updates on his website [www.expeditionclass.com](http://www.expeditionclass.com) via satellite phone.



**MYTH BUSTER:** Teacher Andrew Hughes is ready for the spears and crocodiles. Picture: KIM EISZELE